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No 3

HINTS

ON

ESOTERIC THEOSOPHY.

No. 1.

Is Theosophy a Delusion?

Do the Brothers exist?

Issued under the Authority of the Theosophical Society.

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THESE letters are published with the permission of the writers, not because any of them are altogether free from errors and misconceptions, but because it is hoped that they may help to explain to all interested in the question, the present position of THEOSOPHY; and, by increasing the earnestness of all concerned in the movement, pave the way for more authoritative and less imperfect views on the whole question.

No tree can grow without soil, and THEOSOPHY can only flourish and develop its fair flowers and refreshing fruits, where many pure hearts seeking the truth are gathered together.

April 1882.

Postscript.

THE whole of the original issue of this Pamphlet having been disposed of, a second edition, slightly enlarged, is now published.

July 1882.

HINTS ON ESOTERIC THEOSOPHY.

No. 1.

Is Theosophy a Delusion?
Do the Brothers exist?

No. 1.—(Letter from G—Y—late F.T.S., to H—X—, F.T.S.)

My dear Sir,

I have duly received your long and interesting letter of the————, and have read *it*, as well as its enclosures (Fragments of Occult Truth, the Rules of the Ladies' Theosophical Society, and the address therein contained; and Colonel Olcott's letter of the 30th of September 1881*) with the greatest possible care. I have also re-read Mr. Sinnett's "Occult World," and have given due consideration to all the many little circumstances related by you; yet I am compelled to say that, knowing now, apparently, all that any of you know, I am far from convinced that the Theosophical Society has any real or reliable foundation.

Now please understand me at once. I am not one of the vulgar scoffers. I do not doubt that Madame Blavatsky is a lady by birth. I have seen the original letters from men like Prince Dondoukoff Korsakoff (as high an official in the Russian administration as Lord Ripon is in the British), and I know that she is well born and highly connected. I know, too, all about Colonel Olcott. I have read all the letters

* *Vide* p. 76.

about him, including the late President of the United States' autograph recommendation of him to all United States Ministers and Consuls. So far as their antecedents are concerned I am perfectly satisfied.

I know also that they never have made, and are never *likely* to make, any money out of this business; and that, on the contrary, they have both spent a good deal of money, out of their own private means, to enable the work of the Society to proceed.

I see no reason to question the genuineness of the phenomena recorded in Mr. Sinnett's work. They are similar in class, to many of which I have had personal cognizance. As you know, without ever becoming a convert to their *theories*, I have, for the last twenty years, whenever I have had the opportunity, worked, both in Europe and America, in concert with spiritualists and some of their best mediums.

I know all about mesmerism, so far as it is known to the West; about Reichenbach's researches, some of which I have verified; and I have read many books treating of, or rather hinting at different phases of Occultism.

There was nothing, therefore, *à priori*, revolting to my common sense (as they are revolting to that of many men who have never read upon or personally investigated these questions), in the pretensions always set up by the founders of the Theosophical Society, in every *inner* circle of this, of being the instruments of an august Brotherhood of Adepts. I by no means *believed* that any such Brotherhood existed. I was familiar with the popular traditionary history of the Rosicrucians, the Illuminati, &c. I had often pored and pondered over Zanoni, and I was therefore at no loss to conceive sources from which fictitious ideas of such a Brotherhood might arise; *but*, on the other hand, I was too well aware of the very limited character of our knowledge of matters

psychical, to think of pretending to gauge the possibilities of the universe. I did not *believe* in this Brotherhood, but I felt that it *might* nevertheless be a fact, of which I was quite ready to be convinced.

I have nothing to say against the morality preached by the founders generally, or set forth in the few words attached to the rules of the Ladies' Theosophical Society:—nothing can be better or purer. If I had a remark to make here, it would only be that, if this be Theosophy, it is also the universal theoretical code—Christianity without Christ, as many would call it.

Nor have I anything to say against the avowed objects of the Theosophical Society.

The first, or Universal Brotherhood, is an Utopian idea that has gilded the dreams of philanthropic philosophers in all ages. It is as old as mankind, and for all that I can discover that the Theosophical Society has ever done, or is ever likely to do, still quite as unattainable in practice as it ever has been. This Universal Brotherhood was equally a cardinal doctrine of the founder of Christianity, with what results, in practice, the history of that religion throughout the world only too sadly shows us. It was surely not necessary to start a new Society to put forward *that* doctrine!

As for the second object, the study of ancient languages, literature and religion, a good deal of that has been going on throughout the world during the last twenty-five years without the help of the Theosophical Society, which has not only done nothing worthy the name, as yet, towards fostering or furthering such studies, but manifestly does not contain in it even the germs of any organization which could ever render such furtherance possible. As for the papers that have appeared on such subjects in the THEOSOPHIST, they are almost, without a single exception, *réchauffés* of what has been better said

elsewhere long ago, or else, where in any degree original, crude, unenlightened and almost beneath the criticism of any real scholar.

It is only in its third object that the Society strikes out any at all novel line, and this object alone could justify its existence. Certainly the world required no new Society to preach the old doctrine of loving one's neighbours as one's self, or to encourage a study of ancient literature or religion. So far as these objects are concerned, there is nothing in the Society to justify its foundation. It has no *raison d'être;* but its third object, the investigation of the hidden mysteries of nature and the psychical powers latent in man, is, although not absolutely a *new* idea, one that has been greatly neglected and overlooked, meriting, if there really be anything in it, a special Society to re-enunciate it and urge its prosecution.

Naturally then, despite disclaimers on the founders' parts, this has always been held by all thinking men to be the *real* object of the Society, since, if this were not so, the Society would be meaningless.

It was looking to this object that I joined the Society; I had no objection to the other objects. I was in sympathy with them, but I should have chosen more effectual channels for furthering *these* objects, had they stood alone, and, but for the third object, should never have joined the Society.

Now I was for more than two years a Theosophist. I diligently read the Magazine of the Society. I have conversed with, and questioned something like one hundred Theosophists, of all races, creeds and nationalities. I have enquired and sought diligently, and I cannot discover that either I or *any* other Theosophist has learnt one iota concerning "the hidden mysteries of nature, *or* the psychical powers latent in man," in consequence, or as a result, direct or indirect, of our connection with the Society.

Therefore, I look upon the Society as a delusion. If I alone were left out in the cold I might attribute it to my own shortcomings; but it is not so. Dozens of men, cleverer than Madame Blavatsky, as beneficent, pure and self-devoted as Colonel Olcott, are in the same predicament ; the whole Society is left out in the cold. There is plenty of talk, but nothing is done ; it is *vox, et præterea nihil.*

But you specially draw my attention to the Fragments of Occult Truth, and say that, if we can get a series of papers like this, expounding gradually the whole Philosophy, we shall surely have learned much. Now, in the first place, there is nothing very new in this particular fragment, which has alone as yet been vouchsafed. It is a kind of sublimated Buddhism or Vedantism re-adjusted so as not to traverse directly anything that modern science has proved, or modern spiritualism has established ; and, in the second place, whether it is *worth* learning, much or little of it, depends upon *whether it is true.*

So far as I can learn there is no guarantee for its being anything but a pure speculation, similar to hundreds of others that I have met with in books, ancient and modern—a speculation, less reasonable than some, less probable than others, and less acceptable to my mind and heart than others again of these dreams which crowd the intellectual records of the world.

You say that "two of the adept Brothers personally revised this fragment;" but my dear non-adept friend, how do you *know* this? How do you know that the Brothers exist at all? Have you ever seen or spoken to one of these? Has any cultivated European that you know, except Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky, any independent person on whose judgment and good faith you can implicitly rely, ever seen or spoken to one of them? Answer me candidly and truly, and I know that you *must* answer in the negative.

That the Brothers might exist is, like all other improbable things, quite possible. That they *do* exist in connection with the Theosophical Society and Madame Blavatsky I wholly disbelieve. If this Society had been founded by such a Brotherhood it would have been far more wisely administered; its leaders would have led higher and more consistent lives; its organ would not have been so often disfigured by passages which must revolt every sensible mind, every kind heart; and, lastly, its real founders would have taken means of thoroughly demonstrating their existence to some few, at any rate, of their more prominent supporters.

Now, as you know, we personally pressed this point on two at least of the more prominent Theosophists, and two especially favoured by communications (THROUGH Madame Blavatsky) from the Brothers. Could we get either to say simply: "Certainly the Brothers do exist?" On the contrary, the one said: "Well, I have no doubt they do. I have had no absolutely irrefragable proof, but I have been able to secure what seems to me a nearly perfect chain of circumstantial evidence to the fact of their existence." And when I questioned him, his evidence turned out to consist of—(1), the very different and distinct handwritings of two or three Brothers with whom he supposed himself to have corresponded; (2), numerous phenomena, which were quite within the range of what we know to have occurred elsewhere in connection with mediums; (3), certain pieces of information furnished, which may have been lucky guesses, or, if not, are in no way beyond the sphere of clairvoyance as exhibited elsewhere; and (4), the style and purport of the letters received, which, while some of them were good enough, were many of them below the level of what so clever a woman as Madame Blavatsky might be expected to write, and not one of them indicative, to my mind, of exceptionally high intellectual powers.

He had really no more evidence of the existence of the "Brethren" than the spiritualists have of the

existence of the spirits of their departed friends. Facts there were, many of them, if accurately recorded, inexplicable by modern Western science, which in his case Madame Blavatsky chooses to set down to the Brothers, while the spiritualists' mediums credit similar marvels to "the dear departed."

But the other favoured Theosophist, replying to my question, said he really did *not* know whether the Brothers *did* or *did not* exist. There were great difficulties either way; but on the whole, as then advised, he thought the balance of evidence was in favour of their existence; that he had repeatedly changed his mind, as fresh facts bearing on the question turned up, now pointing in one direction, now in the other; and that, though he *hoped* in the long run to acquire a certainty one way or the other, he thought it very likely he should change his mind intermediately a good many times.

He quite admitted the vital character of the question. He said: "Of course, if the Brothers are a myth, the Society for me is moonshine; they and their supposed knowledge and beneficence are the only things that give it any reality for me. But my view is that, on the whole, it is more likely that they are realities than myths;—that is my present conclusion, deliberately formed after perfectly impartially weighing all the evidence, *pro* and *con*, that I have as yet been able to acquire; and this being so, looking to the enormous importance of giving to mankind the *truth*, about this life and the next, in place of the speculations (and many of these clearly pernicious ones) that under various religious guises now mislead the world, I think it wise to labour and wait; and so, perchance, if the Brothers do exist, win from them these truths. If they do not exist, I shall be none the worse for having tried to do good."

Now to a certain extent I sympathised with this view; but the unfortunate thing is, that, to me, the balance of the evidence seems rather the other way.

But you think you place me on the horns of a dilemma by saying, "either you must believe that the Brothers exist, or you must consider Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott impostors. But impostors *cui bono?* In respectable, in fact good positions in life, what had they to gain? Certainly not money; certainly not popularity; you must at least credit them with sufficient foresight to have foreseen that they must necessarily be greeted with a general chorus of 'fools, knaves, rogues, impostors,' and the like. Then *cui bono* the imposture?"

Now even if I accepted the dilemma (which I do not, for there is a third alternative which you have overlooked), I should not feel in any way cornered. Admitting their good position, admitting Madame Blavatsky's indisputably good family connections and rank, I see nothing in this to bar the possibility of deception. The history of imposture shows that every rank, from prince to peasant, has had its impostors.

Then, again, about money—they were both comparatively poor. How can any one be sure that certainly they *had* no idea of making money? That they have *made* none I know as well as *you*; but I also know that 50,000 new members yearly means £50,000 a year, out of which the founders might have had noble pickings; and how is any one to be certain that knowing, as every person does who has ever read about India, that every rank of native society is honeycombed with a belief in jogis and adepts, they did not *expect* a grand success and a huge revenue? They have not got it; but how can you pretend to assert that this hope was not at least one of their motives? You say that so far from this they have excused four-fifths of those who have joined from the payment of the £1 entrance fee. But, my dear friend, do I suppose them to be fools? Do I fancy that in the face of the outcry that has been raised from time to time about the money matters of the society, they could now be so mad as

to exhibit the least desire for money-making? Besides, it is an old-world proverb: "Angle with a minnow to catch a whale;" and it is good policy, as all fishermen know, to let the little fish go, putting on too large a bait for *their* mouths (and what poor Buddhist ryot in Ceylon *could* pay £1 to join a Society?) if you want to secure the large ones, and there are at least ten millions of fish in India who would swallow the £1 without winking!

Then there is their Magazine, the THEOSOPHIST, their own private property, with which the Society has no financial concern, and which, if really well managed, might have proved a valuable property and yielded a large income. Agreed that it probably, even at the increased rate of subscription, only just pays its way, because the Editor entirely wants that special talent, tact and good taste essential to the success of such a peridiocal; but had she or Col. Olcott any conception of this fact when they started the THEOSOPHIST? Do they even now quite realize it?

Do I then assert that money-making *was* their object? Far from it. I do not even, on the whole, myself believe that it ever entered into their calculations. All I desire to show you is, that it is a quite tenable hypothesis, and your dilemma therefore worthless.

But you say: "Then what motives can have led them on?" I reply, many *may* have actuated them, but in such a case, most probably the love of notoriety—the desire to be known—to be *somebody* instead of *nobody*. Thousands of worse crimes than that of merely bolstering up a pseudo-philanthropical scheme by a little transcendental fiction have been committed from this same love of notoriety—hundreds of assassinations have been traced solely to this source. "They must have known how they would be abused?" Of course, they must, but "better to rule in hell than serve in heaven," and better, think many, to be the universal target for all abuse

than to drag out a prosy life unknown and unregarded. It is notorious that, even in the highest English political circles, the mass of men preferred seeing themselves grossly and hideously caricatured in *Vanity Fair*, to remaining unnoticed by that (so far as its pictures went) grossly libellous print.

And mind, while they doubtless expected much obloquy from the small English community, we must also credit them with sufficient sense to foresee that this very obloquy would serve to stimulate native enthusiasm, and we well know that it has not been all abuse or slander that they have met with; on the contrary, as a rule, they have been everywhere received by the higher as well as the lower classes of natives with respect and consideration, while in Ceylon their tours have been triumphal processions.

A clever, energetic woman of good birth, debarred by comparative poverty from otherwise making a figure in the world, and an American official, whose life had been, like that of all Americans of that class, always *en evidence*, and to whom the cacklings of newspapers were as the breath of life, are just the very people whom you would, *à priori*, think likely to be led into such an enterprise as this by a love of notoriety—of seeming or being something different from, and better than, all their neighbours.

But again you say: "I know them personally, and they are very good, kind-hearted people, quite incapable of any fraud." But my friend, the heart of man is desperately deceitful and wicked altogether; and as *you* do not pretend to be an adept, you will pardon my doubting whether you or any man can certainly tell what any other person is or is not capable of. Nay, can you even be certain that there is anything of which you yourself are not capable under exceptional circumstances? I hold it little short of nonsense to build a controversial argument on your own conviction of somebody else's goodness,

especially on the goodness of people of whom you necessarily know so little. It may satisfy yourself; it will satisfy no one else. What myriads of life-long so-called saints have been proved before life ended to have been in reality the vilest of sinners? What tens of myriads must have escaped detection, though watched throughout a score of years or more by hundreds of eyes and brains as keen or keener than yours?

And after all, though deception *is deception*, and fraud, fraud, I should not think that this particular deception would weigh *very* heavily on the minds of the perpetrators. They would say: "All the objects of the Society are good; no doubt we should like to be reverenced as prophets; but then all we preach is the soundest, purest and most elevated morality; and if to make people listen to us, to gain a hearing, and so enable ourselves to lead them to better things, we do evolve a little fiction about the Brothers out of our own imaginations, what then? It surely is no such heinous sin; it is all with the best possible object, and we might do a great deal worse," and so they *might!*

And now having argued the point out in detail to show you that, even if accepted, your dilemma is worthless, let me tell you that, though dozens and hundreds of my acquaintance do on these and like grounds and reasoning consider them impostors and thus explain their imposture, I personally, though admitting the possibility of the fact, do not incline to believe that such is the case.

There is a third alternative—they may themselves be deceived; and whether this be or be not the case with Madame Blavatsky, I am pretty certain in my own mind that it is so with Col. Olcott. But I suspect that it is so with *both*. I know you will say that here is my inveterate spiritualistic bias showing out, but I am no more a Spiritualist than I am an Adept. I have had indeed proof, superabundant, of the *phenomena* (not the doctrines mind) of spiritualism,

and so have thousands of others; while neither I, nor any other living man that I can hear of, whose testimony appears to me of any real value, has succeeded in obtaining one fraction of real proof of the existence of the Brothers.

I have always suspected that Madame Blavatsky was a powerful medium. I know she is indignant at the idea, but it has always been my belief. That she is a clairvoyante, at times, is not disputed—nor that she possesses considerable magnetic and mesmeric powers.

But I have just seen a long letter of Madame Blavatsky's* sent by you to————, who is as little a believer in the Brothers as myself, in which she fully sets forth her mediumship in youth, and especially how (as spiritualists would say under control) she used to write in a language imperfectly known to her in a perfectly distinct and characteristic handwriting entirely unlike her own, but recognised as that of another person whose spirit was supposed to be controlling her, though, as it later turned out, that person was not really dead, and she supposes herself now to have then acted under the influence of her own fifth principle. Now here at any rate is a clue to the different handwritings of the Brothers. No doubt she may think that, as she grew strong and well, she lost her mediumistic powers; but my view is, that unconsciously to herself, she entered on a different phase of mediumship. She might then well see, converse with and believe in Brothers. No one who knows M. A. (Oxon) doubts that he continually sees and converses with some entity—his own spirit for all I know—that he calls Imperator. She may from time to time see many such. I have seen forms under circumstances which rendered deception impossible. Thousands on thousands have seen them at Eddy's farm. Well, too, might Damodar, and

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* *Vide* p. 86.

Padshah, and Olcott, and the others who are in magnetic harmony with her, occasionally see some of these. Because, though perhaps more often subjective, there is no earthly doubt, I mean to those who have calmly and patiently investigated the question, that such forms are often objective. So far there may be no deception on the part of any one but Madame Blavatsky—nay, it may well be that she herself *thoroughly* believes, though some of course will always suspect that she has some notion of the truth, the more so that she so vehemently scouts the idea of being a medium.

Yet in her highly excitable temperament, restlessness of mind, loose and inaccurate habit of speech, in all her conduct and ways, she is more like a good medium than a "*chela*" of the kind of beings the Adepts are represented to us as being. Wherever she goes, her irascible temper, her want of charity to all who oppose or doubt her, her dogmatic and imperious spirit and vehemence of speech are noticed, at any rate in Upper India; and though at the same time her apparent kindliness of heart, love of justice, hatred of injustice and oppression, and sincere desires for the welfare of her fellow creatures are fully appreciated, Natives and Europeans alike, say, as regards the former set of characteristics, "she is very unlike what any adept or jogi we have ever heard of was supposed to be."

So now, on the whole, it seems to me that, unless or until the Brothers, if such really exist, (and I in no way contest the possibility of the fact) choose to afford some much more conclusive evidence of their existence than they have hitherto vouchsafed to this benighted world, we are bound to hold the true dilemma to be, whether the founders of the Theosophical Society are conscious and culpable or unconscious and innocent impostors. Does this seem a harsh judgment? Assuredly there is not a shade of unkindliness or harshness in my mind towards the founders. Of Madame Blavatsky I know less, or at

least feel less certain; but what I saw of Col. Olcott certainly impressed me most favourably. But I put it to any unprejudiced person whether under the conditions any other conclusions are possible?

If they are erroneous, then let the blame rest, not with me, but with the Brothers, who put forward a Society involving a claim on their behalf of an almost supernatural character, and then, shrinking into their Himalayan hermitages, leave their poor faithful servants to bear the brunt of that distrust and condemnation, by every honest and sensible man, which necessarily follows the enunciation of such a claim, without any subsequent attempt to substantiate it.

Now if you can answer me, do so. I am perfectly open to conviction, but I have thoroughly considered the question; and, "as at present advised," as you cautiously remark, see no way out of the dilemma which I, in my turn, present to you.

Dec. 7th, 1881. G— Y—

No. 2.—(Reply to the foregoing letter.)

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your long letter of the 7th December.

Differing from you widely, as I do; believing the Theosophical Society to be a reality; and believing that the Brothers do exist, I am yet neither surprised at, nor repelled by the position you assume. It is simply the position that I myself until quite recently occupied,—the position at which any thoughtful enquirer, impartially seeking the truth, must almost inevitably first arrive.

Your letter is long, and necessarily raises a variety of collateral issues; but before considering these, I shall endeavour to deal with what appear to be your main

contentions, *viz.*, that the Theosophical Society is a delusion, and that there is not a shadow of evidence of the existence of the Brothers—all the phenomena that we have accepted as such, and all our supposed correspondence with them, being the results of Madame Blavatsky's mesmeric, clairvoyant and mediumistic powers.

Now, first, as to the Society's being a delusion. I cannot admit that even had its objects been confined to the two first enumerated by you, that it must necessarily have been, or even in practice has proved, altogether a delusion. That much less has been done than might and ought to have been done is quite my own view ; but that *something* has been achieved, even you will, on calm re-consideration, confess.

It is true that the idea of Universal Brotherhood is as old as mankind ; but it does not necessarily follow that mankind nowhere required a reminder of this divine idea, or that a Society, specially instituted to promote its practical realization, must be *de trop*. As a matter of fact there is no country probably on the face of the earth in which a resuscitation of that old idea was, and is, more imperatively demanded than in India.

Look round and confess, not only that no brotherhood and no sympathy exist, but that, broadly speaking, mutual distrust and dislike separate all classes of the community from one another—Europeans from Natives, officials from non-officials, covenanted from uncovenanted, Hindoos from Mahomedans, orthodox from unorthodox. Surely in no country in the world would a platform upon which all the myriad classes, castes, sects and races, which combine to constitute the empire, could meet on a footing of brotherly love,—surely nowhere I say would such a platform be a greater and more universal blessing than here.

But you add that the idea is wholly Utopian !

That the standard aimed at is unattainable in its theoretic perfection in the present state of society I freely admit; but that a great and important advance towards it may be secured seems to me not only possible, but, looking to the results already obtained, highly probable. For only consider—an empire of 250 millions of people is not to be impressed perceptibly in a day or even a decade. The Society is but a thing of a day—a seed as yet barely germinating; and yet see how many thousands of Mahomedans, Hindoos, Buddhists, Parsees, Christians, officials and non-officials, governors and governed, have already been brought together by the instrumentality of the Society—have already learnt to know more of and think better of each other? Take a concrete example. You and I belong to totally different grades of society, different races, different religions—have we not become true friends? Do we not now mutually trust each other? And could this possibly have happened but for the Society?

In my turn I say that, if you reply to me, as I know well *you* cannot help doing, frankly and candidly, you *must* reply in the negative—*ex uno disce omnes*. You and I both in our limited circles know many instances in which, although true Brotherhood, such as subsists between us, has not yet been set up, at any rate much of mutual asperity and distrust has been banished or toned down.

One has only to look at the extraordinary success that has attended the efforts made in Ceylon to rouse the long-supine Buddhists to a sense of the importance of purifying their own morals, and educating their children under *Buddhistic* auspices to see what practical good the Society can do.

Or, again, can you point to anything in Indian History parallel to one feat accomplished by the Society? In the year 1880 a mixed delegation of *Hindus* and *Parsees* were deputed by the Bombay Branch to assist the founders in organizing *Buddhist*

Branches in Ceylon. In 1881 the *Buddhists* reciprocated by sending over delegates to Tinnevelly to assist in organizing a *Hindu* Branch, and these *Buddhists* were, together with Col. Olcott, received with rapturous welcome *inside* a most sacred *Hindu* Temple, in the enclosure of which they planted a cocoanut tree in commemoration of their visit.

No! even if the encouragement of mutual appreciation, forbearance and good will amidst the innumerable, heretofore more or less antagonistic, classes of India were the sole object of the Theosophical Society, you could not truly designate it as a delusion, or deny that, even during its brief and chequered existence, it has already effected something towards this object, and afforded fair promise of really important results in its maturity.

As for the second object, the study of ancient languages, science and religion, I agree that it has as yet *apparently* done little to promote this. But do you really expect that in three or four short years studies of this nature can bear fruit worthy of the name? All things must grow, and in this case, even a beginning takes a long time. Yet even in this matter your strictures are too sweeping. Many of the articles and papers that have appeared are most interesting and by no means merit your slashing criticisms, while as for the Society's containing no germs of an organization for furthering such studies, the mere fact that already some of the most learned Pundits, Sanscritists and Pali Scholars of India are enrolled amongst its members, seems a sufficient answer to your strictures.

Then you touch upon the third object of the Society, "the investigation of the hidden mysteries of nature, and of the psychical powers latent in man," and it is most especially because you and a hundred other Theosophists you know have, during two or three years' adherence to the Society, made no iota of

progress in such investigations that you denounce the whole affair as a delusion.

Now you must clearly understand that exoteric and esoteric Theosophy are two widely different things. The first two objects belong to the former; the third to the latter. In exoteric Theosophy any kindly-natured, even though worldly-minded man, living an outwardly respectable life and wishing well to his fellows, may join and do some good. No special preparation is required, no sacrifices are demanded; he may do some good by helping to break down the pernicious barriers of race, caste and creed, thus assisting the eradication of the prejudices and mutual dislikes inseparable from such barriers; he may better *himself* by learning to take a broader and less selfish view of human affairs; he may gradually imbibe some ideas of things higher and better than those in the struggle, to obtain which his time is mainly spent; and, possibly, as time goes on, discover in himself a growing preparedness for esoteric Theosophy. But it is but little after all that he gives, and it is but little therefore that he can justly expect to receive.

But with esoteric Theosophy it is widely different. Into the innermost circle, we are led to believe, none can enter without most strict and long-continued preparation, without very real and weighty sacrifices, without a complete change of life, mind and heart. There is much indeed to be gained, but it has to be fully earned.

A man feels that his state of health is unsatisfactory, and he calls in a physician. This expert tells him that, if he wants to get well, he must eat little, and that only of plain food; that he must give up all liquors, rise early, take regular and moderate exercise, go to bed early, live chastely, work his brain only moderately, and avoid all causes for excitement, bodily and mental. To some few of these precepts, not opposed to his previous habits of

life, the patient, it may be, gives heed; the rest he briefly dismisses with the remark that all this kind of nonsense is quite incompatible with his career. Forgetting all this, when later he finds himself no better, he angrily assures his friends that now for two years he has been under his doctor's care, without growing one bit healthier, and he thereupon denounces his medical attendant as an impostor.

I confess that to me the case of this man seems precisely that of yourself and the multitude of discontented Theosophists, who do me the honour of pouring their bitter complaints into my sympathetic ears. Certainly it was my own case until quite recently. I may not yet be attending as fully as I should to the physician's orders, but I no longer accuse him of being an impostor, no longer endeavour to lay upon *him* the burthen of *my own* shortcomings.

Will you, and others discontented like yourself, ask yourselves, and answer a few simple questions *in foro conscientiæ?*

(1). Am I a total abstainer from all spirituous liquors?

Be it understood that this question stands first, not because there is any special sin, or any sin at all, in the moderate use of such liquors. It is simply because as a physiological fact, the development in the human frame of those psychological (?) powers, by the aid of which alone such investigations, as object No. 3 refers to, can be carried on, is, in 99 cases out of 100 (there are of course rare and exceptional organizations in which this is not true) impossible, so long as any alcohol exists in the system; and long, long after all chemical or other physical tests would utterly fail to detect any traces of this, psychical tests prove that it has not yet been perfectly eliminated.

"But is this true?" My dear friend, if you want

to teach yourself, do so; if you want to cure yourself, why, call in a physician? If you want to learn how a thing is to be done, accept what those who say they know how to do it tell you, and try it for yourself, and see if it be so. In every science there are some fundamental principles that the beginner has to accept at starting and work with as facts, until he has sufficiently mastered the whole subject to form a correct opinion as to their validity. When he has reached that stage, if he then doubts them, he can throw over the whole superstructure on which they rest. But while he is a learner, let him accept, provisionally, those conditions that people, apparently experts, assure him are essential to the success of the experiment he desires to perform.

I do *not* KNOW of my own knowledge that all this is true, but I accept this and the other rules provisionally, determined to work on, and see whether a careful adherence to them will, as I am assured, bring my experiment to a successful issue. Even if it does not, I have the consolation of feeling that this attempted adherence cannot possibly have done me anything but good.

(2). Do I live a perfectly pure and chaste life?

This again is asked, not because there is, *per se*, any sin in sexual intercourse, which is merely the exercise of a natural physical function. Indeed there is, under normal conditions, no sin at all in sexual relations between husband and wife, and the only *sin* there is in irregular relations of this nature, where no breach of solemn obligations is involved, lies in the misery and general disturbance of the moral equilibrium that, in the existing state of society, they so invariably, sooner or later, entail on one or other of the parties, or, what is worse still, on innocent third persons.

But why this is asked, why absolute chastity is insisted on, is simply, partly because the very nerve

substance, destroyed in sexual intercourse, forms part of the matrix in which the powers you seek for have to be developed; and partly because the mental and nervous disturbance caused by all breaches of chastity (however little this may be appreciated by the persons concerned) is incompatible with the serenity essential to this development. It may be added that not only actual chastity, but the absolute exclusion from the mind of all impure thought, is requisite, since such thoughts, in proportion to their intensity and to the time they are allowed to dominate the mind, are similarly antagonistic to the development of psychical powers.

The two rules, to which the first two questions refer, may be said to refer mainly to physical obstacles to progress;* the remainder deal with mental and moral preparations no less essential, we are taught, to this same progress.

(3.) Am I perfectly truthful, just and honest, in all my words and deeds?

(4.) Is my mind perfectly and permanently in a state of serenity, *i.e.*, have I banished from it all passion, pride, hate, malice, envy, anger, greed and

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* When I wrote this letter I was myself so little advanced that I did not know that there was a third rule having reference to physical preparations, no less important than the two referred to in the text. This rule requires entire abstinence from all fish, flesh, fowl, and eggs—in fact from all animal food, except milk and its preparations, butter, cream, ghi, cheese, &c. A vegetable diet, supplemented only by these latter, and milk, is essential to any considerable development of the psychical senses in the great majority of mankind. I myself, though brought up in Europe as a flesh-eater, have, since I wrote this letter, given up entirely all animal food, and have reduced the *quantity* of liquids and solids I had been accustomed to consume by fully half, and that without the smallest inconvenience,—nay so far as I can judge with a distinct benefit to my health. At present my daily food consists of from 12 to 14 ozs. of bread, rice, butter, vegetables, fruit, and sugar, and from 16 to 20 ozs. of water, milk and tea. But as time goes on these quantities will be found capable of great reduction, and such reduction will distinctly aid the development of the super-sensuous faculties, provided that this repression of the physical elements is accompanied by the expansion of the mental and moral parts of our nature.—H. X.—*June* 1882.

craving for worldly advantages ? Is my heart in fact at peace with itself and all the world ?

(5.) Have I learnt to subordinate self to others, my own pleasure to the good of my fellows ? Is my heart filled with loving kindness towards all living beings ; and do I watch for opportunities of doing secret kindness to all within my reach ?

(6.) Do I thoroughly realize the empty and transitory character of all earthly things, and, while zealously discharging all duties falling to my lot during my brief halt in this world, can I truly say that all my desires centre on the unseen and imperishable, and on the attainment of that higher knowledge which leads to these ?

If you cannot, as a whole, answer these questions truly in the affirmative, then you must not wonder that you have made no progress. When I say " on the whole" I do not mean that there shall never be any isolated hasty thought, word or deed at variance with the rules, implied by these last four questions, but only that you shall have deliberately and earnestly adopted these as your standards, and shall on the whole have consistently acted up to them. *Perfect* conformity with these rules is not in man until he has made considerate progress in things spiritual. Occasional slips there will necessarily be ; all that is requisite is that the spirit of these rules should pervade the mind and guide the conduct. The first two rules are absolute.

This then is the prescription that is given us by our physicians ; and, until we have fairly tried it, we have no right to denounce them as impostors. Nay, until we do so, and having done so fail to obtain the results promised, it is we who are pretending to seek what we will not undergo the labour necessary to find, who are really the shams and not the Society.

And here as I am on the subject, I may be per-

mitted a slight digression, which, though not affecting directly your argument, will throw some light upon the questions above alluded to.

It must not be supposed that every one able and willing to adhere to all these rules (and other subsidiary and less important ones,* which for the present need not be enumerated) will necessarily thereafter become an Adept. Perfect adeptship requires, in addition to all other things, a certain physical and mental organization, which is rare, but which, like other similar peculiarities, is generally hereditary.

But what we are taught is, that all who do adhere to these rules will certainly attain to a spiritual insight unknown to the mass of mankind, will certainly succeed in developing some psychical powers and attain a position in which it is possible for them to prosecute at least some preliminary investigations into the hidden mysteries of nature and the latent psychical powers of man.

In all ages, and in all creeds, there have been true saints, whose lives have been in accord with these rules, and who have been credited by their contemporaries with miraculous powers. The present age of materialistic disbelief asserts that these are all fables, but what we are taught,—*viz.*, that, while there have been innumerable impostors, innumerable frauds, there have also been innumerable true saints, Christian, Buddhist, Mahomedan and Hindoo, who have acquired powers that we, in our ignorance, call miraculous,—seems to me, I confess, the more rational explanation. But in the case of most of such saints, they acquired these powers unwittingly—as a necessary consequence of naturally suitable organizations, further developed by the purity and spirituality of their lives and thoughts,—and having no one to teach them the *science* that explains, the really

* One of these omitted rules is, however, of great importance, *vide* page 23.—H. X.—*June* 1882.

natural, though to the carnal man miraculous, occurrences which resulted from their more or less accidental and unintelligent exercise of the powers with which they became endowed, they did comparatively little with them.

In their own hearts they believed that it was their particular deity who was directly interposing to aid or glorify them; they never realized that it was their own inner diviner self,—from which their pure lives had half unwound the material bands which hopelessly swathe it in most men,—struggling feebly, in its unaccustomed liberty, (like a life-long fettered prisoner suddenly released) to assert itself.

To them it was the proof of the truth of that particular creed that filled their hearts, not a necessary sequence under immutable natural laws of their physical organization, the lives they lived, and the state of mind they had acquired.

But, again, it is not absolutely true that without a rigid adherence to these rules, no development of psychical powers can occur. There are exceptional cases in which a special type of organization carried to a high pitch renders the development of some powers or faculties almost independent of the lives led. True, such persons fall far short of what they might have become had their lives been purer and better; but still, despite shortcomings, they are so constituted by nature as to be what are called natural mystics.

Broadly, however, for the mass of mankind, there is but one lawful road to the acquisition of the hidden knowledge, and that is by living the life.

No doubt there is another school, who share to some extent this occult knowledge, and attain to it by ways more or less evil, and use it more or less unscrupulously. These are known as the "Brothers of the Shadow," "Sorcerers," or practitioners of

"Black Magic." From this class have always developed the "Wizards," "Witches," "Obeah-women," "Lycanthropes," dealers in evil potions and the like, and such unfortunately have existed in most countries at one time or another.

But this is admittedly a digression. I have shown that, as regards its first two avowed objects, the Society can certainly *not*, justly, be designated a delusion; while, as regards the third object, I venture to think you will admit that, if the conditions necessary for its prosecution are as stated by the real originators of the Society, *you* are hardly yet in a position to form any opinion as to whether it is, or is not, a delusion.

I now turn to your second main head of complaint, *viz.*, that there is not a shadow of evidence of the existence of the Brothers; all the phenomena accepted as such, and all our supposed correspondence with them, being due to Madame Blavatsky's mesmeric, clairvoyant and mediumistic faculties.

Now, if this latter hypothesis was tenable, or again if for "a shadow of evidence" you substituted "any absolutely conclusive proof," I should be compelled to abandon the argument. But according to my view the hypothesis is not tenable. We both have some experience of phenomena, and are both versed in the literature of spiritualism; and I ask you whether the whole history of spiritualism furnishes any parallel cases. Take the sounding of the astral bell, which dozens of us have heard in-doors and out of doors, morning, noon and night, close to us and far away up in the air—when large parties were gathered together, and when we have been alone in the room in which Madame Blavatsky was, and on at least two occasions in rooms more or less distant from her—caused by the exercise of her own powers, according to her statement, at times when we were waiting to hear it, and caused by the Brothers, according to her account, to attract her attention, at times when

we were not in the least expecting it, and when she was in earnest conversation with us, herself speaking, on one occasion at any rate, when the bell rung out.

The sound, by the way, is quite *sui generis*. You can most nearly imitate it by striking the finger wetted on the edge of a finger glass half full of water, and drawing it for a second along the edge.

They tell us that this is one of their modes of drawing each other's attention when they desire to communicate from a distance, and though they will not tell us exactly how to perform this or any other phenomenon, they do explain *generally* the principles on which it depends.

And here once for all let me give the reasons which they put forward to explain their refusal to teach us how to do any single one of the marvellous things that they have done for us. They say that one and all depend in great measure upon their knowledge of manipulating the "astral light," or if you like it, "Ether ;"—that intangible, to us invisible, fluid which permeates all matter, all space—the entire universe in fact—and which is the vehicle of all force and the connecting link, to employ a popular form of speech, between matter and spirit. There is scarcely any limit to what men, possessed of the requisite physical as well as mental organization can effect once they possess the knowledge of how to use and direct this fluid, of which transmitting agency electricity, light, heat and other forces are but manifestations. By a mere exercise of will, the force that holds together the ultimate atoms of any dead matter is neutralized, and the object passes into the unseen universe. By another effort these atoms are propelled along a current in any direction, to any desired place, and there the neutralizing force withdrawn, the atoms recrystallize (if I may use an incorrect term, in order to convey some conception of what takes place) in their most recent form of union, and the object repasses into the visible universe.

You have often been at the Tower of London, I dare say, and have there seen the British Crown Jewels, in their massive plate glass cabinets (if I may so express myself) in their strongly barred room, strongly guarded. But if I possessed the powers Adepts are said to do, I could, sitting in my room here in India, cause all those jewels to disappear from London, and recrystallize on my table. I could, in fact, if wicked enough, rob the whole of mankind without any chance of detection. Or, again, take a case said to have occurred many years ago in Germany, in which a Brother, who has corresponded with us, is said to have taken part. He was at this time a student, and though in course of preparation was not then himself an Adept, but was, like all regular *chelas*, under the special charge of an Adept. A young friend of his was accused of forgery, and tried for the same. Our Brother, then a student as above explained, was called as a witness to prove his friend's handwriting; the case was perfectly clear and a conviction certain. Through his mentor, our Brother learnt that his accused friend did not really deserve the punishment that would necessarily fall on him, and which would have ruined not only him, but other innocent persons dependent on him. He had really committed a forgery, but not knowingly or meaningly, though it was impossible to show this. So when the alleged forged document was handed to the witness he merely said: "I see nothing written here," and returned the deed blank. His mentor had caused the entire writing to disappear. It was supposed that a wrong paper had been by mistake handed to the witness; search was made high and low, but the deed never appeared, and the accused was perforce acquitted.

Now, mind I am far from asserting that all this is *true*. I merely tell the tale as 'twas told to me. I only mention it to explain the position that the Brothers (supposing they exist, as I am inclined to think they do) take up. They say, "if we teach you how to work one of these phenomena, we have put

one end of the clue into your hands, and some of you thus started are quite sharp enough to work your way with this into the innermost recesses of the labyrinth, without further help from us and perhaps in despite of us. For we are bound by such laws that we could not exercise the powers we possess hostilely towards you or any other human being. Now," they say, "it is not enough that you should lead the required lives. This may enable us to deal directly with you and help you; it may lead to your acquisition in an accidental and rule-of-thumb way of certain powers according to your innate natural capacities, which, if your spirit rechanged for evil, would assuredly soon pass from you; but before we will induct you into the rationale, the science of these, to you magical, though in reality purely natural operations, we require absolute security that you will never misuse these powers—(nay for you might unknowingly, and with the best intentions, as a fact *mis*-use them) that you will never use them except in rigid accordance with those wise laws that the experience of five thousand years has shown to be the only infallible safeguard against their misuse. So until you become our scholars, (*chelas*) submitting yourselves absolutely to our guidance, we will teach you no secrets; nay of the great secret we will teach you nothing until by your own free will you have so placed your minds (to use a popular term) under our control, that we possess absolute security against any misuse of powers, of which we are the trustees, and for the misuse of which, by any one taught by us, we are morally responsible—a security such as the entire order as a body possesses against each of us."

Unfortunately for us, we are most of us true Westerns; we are willing enough to try and live the life, some of us unreservedly, some with certain reservations; but we, none of us, feel disposed to subordinate our wills entirely to those of any other people, Adepts or non-adepts. We conceive that we are responsible for our own acts, words, and thoughts, and that we have no right to put ourselves in a position in which

we *might* possibly have to do what we thought wrong. They deny that this could ever happen, but the question has never been threshed out nor their answer explained. I may notice that communications are rather grudgingly made; that only one single Brother, so far as we know, is favourable to us; and that he is greatly hindered by higher authorities. The great bulk of the Brotherhood (although it contains some Westerns, and although one Englishman in past times attained almost to the highest rank) consider, we are told, that, in consequence of their rude physical organization, materialistic education, sceptical spirit, bigoted adherence to the religious notions in which they were educated of Heaven, Hell and a Personal God, inveterate attachment to the canons of physical research, independence of character and incapacity for taking anything *on* trust, want of faith in fact, westerns, however clever and for them, liberal-minded, are not worth wasting time on, and should not have been brought into the business.

Anyhow, except Col. Olcott, no European, now in India, that I know of has consented to become one of their regular *chelas*, nor do I know any that are likely to become this. The rest of us only hope to be able hereafter to deal directly face to face with some of them, and so obtain really conclusive proof—in other words, absolute certainty—both of the existence of the Brothers and of the extent of their powers.

On this, of course, depends whether we accept the philosophy we are gradually picking up from them, and of which Fragments of Occult Truth are specimens, as absolute truths, or whether we continue to regard them as speculations—possible, but unestablished truths.

But though Col. Olcott is a scholar, he can perform no phenomenon,—except very rapidly developing clair-audient and clairvoyant powers—and is yet, as far as I can see, nearly as far from the great secret as any

of us ; and why this is so is explained in his letter,* to which I would recall your attention, as it is in many respects well worthy of careful perusal. Madame Blavatsky, we are told, stands on a different footing. In the first place, she has the requisite organization. She is not only a *chela*, but *has been* regularly educated according to their system, and has passed through several of the stages which precede the lowest grade of adeptship. *She* possesses powers, and can communicate at will with the Brothers, be she or they where they may ; but having passed through those stages, that guarantee for entire submission to the will of the Brotherhood above referred to has been taken from her, some of the consequences of which are, we are informed, to be traced in that hastiness of temper and occasional inaccuracy of speech on which you have so severely commented, and of which more hereafter.

This, again, is a terrible digression ; but you, who fancy you know all that any of us have heard, have really as yet learnt so little of what is familiar to all of us in the inner exoteric circle, that to put you at all in a position to judge fairly on the subject, I am compelled to deviate here and there from my direct argument.

To return : My contention is that the astral bell phenomenon has no parallel, taking all the varied circumstances, places and conditions under which it has been produced in the entire history of spiritualism.

Take, again, the constant addition of postscripts and marginal notes in the well-known characteristic handwritings of Brothers who have communicated with us, to letters in transit, through the post ; many, no doubt under circumstances that admit the hypothesis that Madame Blavatsky might, by some, though hardly conceivable, trick have somehow got hold of the letters and written on them under control, but some, when the letters can never have been near her,

* Printed below, p. 76.

or in any sort of way within her reach or even ken—can you match this out of any well-authenticated spiritualistic record?

Or, again, take the case of one of us, without premeditation, sitting down to write a note to one of the Brothers, on a subject which had not been broached, and of which Madame Blavatsky and the rest were entirely ignorant. The letter was completed and closed without any one going near the writer.

Thus closed, it was, as usual, handed to Madame Blavatsky for transmission. She took it, put it into her pocket, went into her own room which opened out of the one in which the writer was, and returned within half a minute, saying it was gone. Ten minutes or so after this, during which she had never been out of the sight of the writer or his wife, and during the greater portion of which she had been lying on a couch in the same room in which the writer was, she suddenly said: "There's your letter," which accordingly appeared on the pillow (just where her head had rested) apparently untouched, except that on the outside the writer's name had been substituted for that of the brother. The envelope was carefully examined, and there was no trace of its having been opened, yet on the blank half sheet was recorded in the brother's well-known handwriting an answer to the question put. Now Madame Blavatsky had not been 30 seconds out of sight, not long enough simply to open the note, securely closed, much less to open it so as to exhibit no traces of opening, take the note out, write on it, re-fold it and re-close it.

I do not think that even to this incident you will find a parallel amongst mediumistic experiences.

I may add that in this and many other cases it was explained to us that the answers given were not written, but "precipitated." Just as they profess to be able to cause any writing to disappear from any document, so they profess to be able to cause

any writing they like to appear on any paper. They have, they say, to conceive what they want expressed, form the words in, to use a popular phrase, the mind's eye, and then project them on the astral light to the spot where they wish them to be impressed. I say here (as I am continually obliged to do) to use a popular phrase, because the English language contains no words to represent the ideas contained in their science-philosophy, and, though we are slowly coining words, to stand for these, they are still as little known as are the Tibetan and Sanscrit terms they give us ; and I am compelled, therefore, to use some known phrase that conveys some idea of what it is desired to express, or which, at any rate, awakens ideas having some relation or resemblance to that. But I am not going to recapitulate all the phenomena to which one or other of us have been witness, and several of us by nature highly sceptical; undoubtedly some of them are explicable on the theory that Madame Blavatsky is a medium, but some of them are, it appears to me, decidedly *not* so explicable.

You gain nothing by saying, "but perhaps she is a different kind of medium to any on record." With the tens of thousands of mediums in Europe and America,—not merely professional ones, but members of private families, whose full names even are only known in their own domestic circles,—in regard to the phenomena attending whom we have records, we know by this time pretty well what can and is, and what is not, brought about by the agency of the supposed spirits who control mediums; and when you find a distinct set of phenomena, such as have never occurred in connexion with any of the innumerable mediums of spiritualists, occurring in connexion with Madame Blavatsky to say "she is a different kind of medium to any on record," is to concede the point. For she is then not what spiritualists call a medium, or mean when they use the word, for few of the manifestations usually accompanying mediums

occur in her presence, while in connexion with her occur things unknown in connexion with those persons, and the explanation to which you *seem* to incline (I say seem because you hover between conscious and unconscious fraud) falls to the ground.

Of course, in one sense of the word, but *not* that in which now-a-days it is *universally* used, Madame Blavatsky would at once admit that she was a medium, *viz.*, a medium through which living men, of abnormally developed psychic powers (not spirits of dear departed ones, mind) communicate with us ordinary mortals.

But on a former occasion you objected, I remember, to this very statement, asking why they did not communicate direct? And you said that being living men, possessing an objective reality, you could not understand what they wanted any medium for, and why they did not come boldly out and, face to face with their brother men, preach their own doctrines and philosophy, and do their work themselves, and do it well and thoroughly, instead of working through instruments so infinitely inferior to themselves, and whom, according to what we were told, they admitted to fall in many respects short of what they wished, albeit they declared them to be, on the whole, the best fitted for their purposes that they had been able to find.

A moment's reflection will show you that they could not come boldly out face to face with the ignorant and superstitious masses of mankind. Did they do so, preach their doctrines and exhibit their powers, then you will admit that, *especially* in this country, nine-tenths of the population would—protest as the Adepts might—treat these as gods, worship them, and add another, and most rampant one, to the gross superstitions that already cover the fair fields of human souls with a deadly jungle. Of all things they seek to avoid creating any delusions of this kind. To us they perpetually repeat—

"We are not gods, we are men like yourselves, a little wiser perhaps in some things, but less acquainted with the ways of the world. By a course of training, involving suppression of the outward and physical, and if you will, worldly sensations and desires, and a concentration of our entire energy on the inner self and things spiritual, we have mastered, some of us more, some less, the secrets of the working of those intangible invisible powers, of which the physical or manifested universe is the visible outcome—a scum as it were floating on the surface of (to the physical eye) an absolutely transparent and colourless, and therefore unrealizable ocean. We have succeeded in withdrawing our gaze from this glamour-shrouded scum, and in looking down into the clear depths, we have ascertained to a great extent the course and causes of the currents ever thrilling through that ocean, and ever agitating the scum that floats upon its surface. Nay, we have learnt how to a small extent to guide and direct minor branches of these currents, and so produce effects in the visible world, incomprehensible by, and, unless actually witnessed, incredible to the untaught man.

"But we are neither infallible nor omnipotent; we are not perhaps even wholly free from prejudices, from likes and dislikes, and other similar worldly follies.

"Many of us certainly still love our country and our countrymen better than other countries and people of other nationalities. We are less liable to error than you in any important matter, because where we take the trouble to investigate, we can calculate with certainty *almost* every factor involved in the equation (and every event, great or little, remember is one side of an equation), whereas to you half the factors, and those the most potent—we mean those pertaining to the unseen universe—are unknown, while even of those appreciable to your unvivified senses, the majority are still incalculable. But for all that, even with the utmost care, there are cases in which we may be at fault, and in the majority of

matters, not of sufficient importance to justify the employment of the time necessary for the investigation, in which we form opinions in the ordinary method and on the data patent to all, we are only less liable to err than yourselves, because not liable to be influenced by worldly passions and desires.

" We are not omnipotent—nay, we are as nothing before the mighty tide of cosmic powers. We can do things to you inexplicable, miraculous, but they are but as the moving of a single mote floating in a wandering sunbeam. Our lives are spent in endeavouring to benefit mankind, but it is only to a limited extent that we can influence the tide of human affairs. As well might one weak human arm seek to stay the rushing waters of the mighty Ganges in flood as we feeble band of Adepts to stem the resistless stream of cosmic impulses. All we can do is, by some groin here, some few hurdles there, somewhat to alter the set of the current, and so avert, here and there, catastrophies that we see impending; or, again, by tiny canals, here and there, to lead off minute portions of the stream to fertilize tracts that, but for our efforts, would have remained deserts. You have asked how it is that, if this be so, the world knows nothing of us and our deeds? Like Nature in harmony, with whose laws and inherent attributes all our operations are carried on, we work in silence and in secret. Like Nature unthanked and unknown, our work must ever be. All earthly rewards for our work—name, fame, 'the applause of wondering 'senates'—are to us, like the rest of this world's toys, mere illusions, powerless even to *please*, those who have once looked behind them into the eternal truths above which they float; 'for,' as your great apostle, himself an initiate, grandly said, 'the things that are seen are transitory, but the things that are unseen are eternal.' And well for us that it is so, since our records afford too many instances of men, well on the upward path we tread, who, their feet caught in these very snares, have fallen, irrevocably, as regards this life."

I do not think that any one will dispute that, in the present state of mankind, and especially mankind in the East, in which, as they themselves admit, the Adepts as a body are most especially interested, any public appearance and ministry of the Brothers would produce incalculable harm, would give birth to a new crop of baneful superstitions, would disorganize society, disturb the whole course of public affairs, and not improbably extinguish finally that small Brotherhood, in whose sole custody remains the secret knowledge of the universe.

I remember that in a former letter you characterized one of the Brothers' arguments on this head as "silly," and yet, if you think the matter over, you will see that it is not so. The mysteries of death and the possible world beyond the grave are the sole things that stir to its utmost depths every human heart. To the world all this is still shrouded in darkness; various religions assert this or that about these awful mysteries; but there is no tangible evidence of the truth of these so-called revelations, and they are everywhere fast losing their hold even on the minds of the masses, as they have long since lost all vital hold upon the bulk of educated minds.

Once let it be generally known and believed that there existed men who not only knew all about death, but were able to, and habitually did, watch the progress of the immortal portion of man after death, witnessed what befell it, and knew why and how in each case this occurred—once let this be known and thoroughly believed, and neither walls of adamant nor triple gates of brass, neither oceans nor the snowy ranges shooting up miles high into the intense inane, could keep these knowers from the overwhelming rush of human beings, mad,—for all violent spiritual upsurgings become a sort of madness—mad, I say, with the intense resolve to learn and have proof of all they were taught. Under such conditions adeptship must cease to exist. The maintenance of their powers demands much of silence and solitude. The Adept,

if he is to continue one, above all if he is to progress (and there is almost as great a difference between the higher and lower Adepts as there is between these latter and the uninitiated,) must live a great deal in his own (to use the current phrase) soul. He cannot mix much with ordinary men. All human beings are surrounded by an atmosphere, an aura, the outcome, the astral pictures if you like, of their deeds, words and thoughts. Thought, we are told, is material, just as much as speech and deeds, though not equally appreciable to the physical senses. Carbonic acid gas is just as material when it floats an intangible and invisible vapour as when you touch and see it a frozen liquid. Around the vast bulk of mankind the circumambient aura is evil, full of all that is ever welling up from hearts which, as you truly say, quoting one of the greatest of the ancients, are desperately deceitful and wicked altogether. Now this *aura* acts insensibly on all who come within its influence, and where bad is as pernicious to the soul as is a fetid atmosphere to the body. As has been said in the Fragments, "evil communications corrupt good manners," though a trite proverb, embodies, like many such, an eternal truth. Insensibly and slowly, but surely, the aura hanging round wicked and worldly people deadens the spiritual perceptions of those it acts upon, and no Adept could long remain in a mental atmosphere such as hangs over and interpenetrates every great capital or indiscriminate gathering of mankind, without losing much of his powers, and forfeiting for long all chances of progress.

And here you have a partial answer to the further question, why—even admitting that the Brothers could not without serious risk come openly forward and do their own work amongst and preach their own doctrines to the masses of the mankind,—they could not yet deal directly with a selected number of Theosophists, and thus pave the way for the gradual infusion of the truths about them amongst mankind, instead of leaving the whole of us to grope

our way, now hoping, now doubting, now disbelieving, instead, in fact, of leaving us in the pitiable state of uncertainty in which most of us are ?

Col. Olcott's letter throws some light upon this also. The fact is, almost all, if not all of us, are still too deeply immersed in the fetid mud of wordly, if not actually wicked, cares and desires to be approached or directly dealt with by the Brothers without the greatest repugnance.

What to our physical senses are the odours that hang about sewers and slaughter-houses, that and worse to their spiritual senses are the aura that hang about us. That by the exercise of psychic powers they can repel the evil influences that surround us, and prevent any injury to themselves is true no doubt, but the psychic like the physical powers of man are limited, and easily exhaustible. Why should they *waste* powers in dealing with those unfitted, and unwilling to fit themselves, for dealing with them without such waste ? There are always in the world men who have fitted themselves for this intercourse, and with these, they tell us, they *do* deal directly.

But another perhaps more important reason is the inevitable uselessness of any attempts on their part to deal directly with people not spiritually purified. Though one went to them from the dead they would not believe. If a Brother were to visit an ordinary man a dozen times, would he believe ? If the Brother came in the flesh he would think him an impostor ; if he came in his astral form, and the man's eyes were opened so as to see him, he would persuade himself it was a trick of his own fancy or of some one else's devising. No, the mass of mankind, even the mass of the more highly educated Theosophists, who have in no way purified their spiritual natures, possess that spiritual sense or insight which alone renders *conviction* possible, still only in a potential or dormant state.

There is an infinity of work that the Brothers can do, and *that*, they say, they *do* do. Why should they waste time and powers (they are only men, remember) over what from the nature of the conditions must be an all but, if not utterly, fruitless toil?

But now I must return to your assertion, that there is not a shadow of evidence of the existence of any such Brothers. Certainly I have no absolutely conclusive proof of this. I have never seen nor spoken to one, and till lately I myself quite doubted their existence; I know of only one cultivated European, excluding Col. Olcott and Madame Blavatsky, *viz.*, Mr.—— who has seen and conversed with one of them, and though to me, who know him and his mental capacity well, his statement carries great weight, as evidence to the outside public, it is *nil*, since he was admittedly at the time in a sort of trance. At the same time it is necessary to remark that the fact of this "vision" not having been an ordinary dream was verified by an actual removal and change of place of a material object. Nor can I point to any one on whose judgment and good faith I can "implicitly rely," who has seen and conversed with any one of the Brothers.

But is not this latter question of yours a somewhat idle one? On whose judgment can any man *implicitly* rely? Does any wise man *implicitly* rely on his *own* judgment? *A fortiori* does he *implicitly* rely on any one else's judgment?

The hypothesis of the existence of the Brothers rests partly on a long series of phenomena, several of which are outside all authenticated spiritualistic experiences; partly on communications supposed to have come from them, many received in altogether phenomenal manners, as for instance, inside letters, sent in some cases by persons knowing nothing either of Madame Blavatsky or Theosophy—letters that, as far as human intelligence is of any avail to decide the point, Madame Blavatsky could by no

possibility have had access to, or even knowledge of, and sometimes dropped in front of the person they were addressed to under circumstances that seemed to preclude the possibility of their having been so dropped by any known physical agency; and partly on the statements of Col. Olcott, Padshah, Damodar, (to whom you alluded in your former letter) and others, also natives, who have publicly testified to seeing one or other of the Brothers. I say publicly, because I believe from what I have heard—and this not solely from Madame Blavatsky, or people connected with her—that there are a large number of natives who have received absolute proof and possess an absolute certainty of the existence of the Brothers, under whom many of them are working, and in whose steps they are treading.

How from age to age has the Brotherhood been recruited? The Adepts are no more immortal than the rest of us. Their lives are prolonged far beyond the Psalmist's three score and ten, but still with all their science, all their knowledge, their bodies, like all the other phantasma of this illusory life, wear out at last. Some few of the very highest, utterly self-disregarding beings, voluntarily re-enter in new bodies this troublous life; the re-incarnation of the Dalai, Teshoo and two other Lamas, is not, we are told, a legend, but a sober truth; but be this as it may, the vast majority of Adepts, one life's work well done here, pass away for ever from this world.

The Brotherhood is maintained by new recruits, and for ages the immense majority of these have been Easterns, and of these a very large proportion have been natives of India. No doubt there are Adepts everywhere,. but India appears to have been the earliest traceable home of Occultism, and more of it lingers here than anywhere else.

True, the Brotherhood admittedly exists in greatly diminished numbers; a wave of materialism has rolled over the entire globe, and India has no more

escaped the curse than other countries, and for thousands that twenty centuries ago might have been found here, working towards adeptship, hundreds could scarcely now be found. Still such men *are* at work in every province, and all such, who have made any real progress, equally with the few who, under the new dispensation (as contrasted with the old Buddhistic and Brahminical systems, though all have one common root), have publicly avowed the fact, possess a certainty of the existence of the Brothers.

But you will urge that this is mere talk. You said most truly that every class of Native society was honeycombed with a belief in jogis and Adepts (who indeed are only scientific as opposed to rule-of-thumb jogis). Do you suppose that any such incredible belief could have permeated the minds of 200 millions of people and clung securely there for thousands of years, while empires rose and fell, languages were born and died, and all else, even religions, waxed and waned, if it had no substantial basis of fact?

But let us rather consider the evidence actually before us. I take Col. Olcott, and again refer you to his letter.* You reject his testimony, and tell me that it is absurd to build an argument on my conviction of somebody else's goodness. Now, in one sense, this is theoretically true, but practically it is a fallacy. All matters in the world are mainly dealt with on conceptions of other people's character; all business is carried on, on the basis on which you deem it absurd to build even an argument; all suits are decided; every mundane transaction rests upon this basis. Admittedly mistakes may be made, but broadly these conceptions, founded on our knowledge of human nature, prove correct. I claim no infallibility. I may, of course, be deceived. Col. Olcott (though you yourself admit having been impressed with his good faith) *may* after all be a double-distilled hypocrite, an arch deceiver; but

* *Vide* page 76.

taking all the circumstances of the case, this is a barely possible hypothesis—one quite as difficult, if all the circumstances be reviewed, to accept as that of the existence of the Brothers; and having had much intercourse with him, having jealously regarded his words and deeds, I have formed the conclusion that he is a thoroughly good, honest, sincere man; and this being so, I submit that the deliberate statement he makes is a very fair ground on which to build an argument for the existence of the Brothers. Mind, I never professed to call it conclusive proof, but it is fair ground for an argument; it is distinct and tangible evidence which cannot be disregarded, though each different person will attach more or less weight to it according to his knowledge of Col. Olcott and his conviction, derived from a personal study of him, of his honesty.

But turn to some of the natives. You specially in a former letter referred to Damodar, and you asked how it could be believed that the Brothers would waste time with a half-educated slip of a boy like him, and yet absolutely refuse to visit and convince men like————and————, Europeans of the highest education and of marked abilities.

But do you know that this slip of a boy has deliberately given up high caste, family, friends and an ample fortune, all in pursuit of the truth? That he has for years lived that pure, unworldly, self-denying life which, we are told, is essential to direct intercourse with the Brothers? "Oh a monomaniac," you say, "of course, *he* sees anything and everything!"

But do you not see whither this leads you? Men who do not lead the life, do not obtain direct proof of the existence of the Brothers. A man does live the life and avers that he has obtained such proof, and you straightway call him a monomaniac, and refuse his testimony. How is it possible ever to give you evidence that will lead you, as we have been led, to believe in the existence of the Brothers

as a strong probability, although unable to assert it as a fact? Really in this respect the position of many men seems to be analogous to that of the school boy, who says, "those who ask shan't have, and those who don't ask don't want;" quite a "heads I win, tails you lose" sort of position.

"But why is it chiefly, almost exclusively, among natives that the Brothers appear to work?" is a question often put. "Why do they not rather deal with the far more enlightened and better educated Europeans, and leave *them* to spread the matter amongst the natives." In the first place, though this goes for little with people so essentially just, I believe that the great bulk of the Adepts love the natives, and at best only tolerate Europeans, at any rate Western Europeans, for Magyars and such races are not included I gather in their antagonism. In the second place—and this is the real hitch and the main source of their want of sympathy with us—we, Westerns, are infinitely less suited for the acquisition of this knowledge than are Easterns.

This is partly due to physical organization. You know perfectly that it was usually amongst delicate or sickly women that Reichenbach, whom you mention, discovered his best sensitives; it is always these who make the best clairvoyantes. All abnormal developments of psychical powers require a corresponding repression of the physical nature, which may be the result either of delicacy of organization or mental control. As a matter of fact the comparatively delicate or feeble organization of Easterns—the result partly of climate, partly of vegetarian diet—is more favourable to the development of psychical powers than the more robust animal food-fed organizations of the Westerns. Moreover, as I have already mentioned, special capacity for psychical development is eminently hereditary; and adeptship having been known for at least 4,000 years in India, and having been in past ages widely spread here, while it has been absolutely unknown in the

West, there are an infinitely greater number here, specially capable for such development than in Europe, or at least Western and Central Europe.

But mental organization and inclinations also play an important part in the question. Westerns, trained more or less in the positive school of physical research, which verifies everything by the application of direct external tests, are almost inherently incapacitated from accepting and making progress in a system of metaphysical research which verifies everything by reference to internal intuition. On the other hand, this latter system accords as perfectly with the less energetic, more meditative mind of the Indian, as the physical method does with the more active mind of the Englishman ; and it has always accordingly from the remotest periods been known and followed here.

From these and many kindred causes it follows, we are informed, that for every Western European capable and willing to prosecute with any success the study of occultism, at least a thousand Easterns, even better qualified, could be found ; and it need, therefore, never surprise even those Europeans who believe in the Brothers, if, as time goes by, almost every person appearing to attain any successful results should prove to be a Native or Eurasian, for unquestionably the half blood, and long domiciliation of these latter in this country puts many of them nearly on the same level as regards these matters as the whole-blooded native.

To return : I think I may claim to have shown that the Theosophical Society cannot fairly, even now in its infancy, be called a delusion ; that the phenomena that have occurred in connection with it are not explicable on the theory of Madame Blavatsky's mediumistic powers, many of them having been of a nature never previously observed in the case of any other medium ; and, lastly, that, though there is no certainty to us of the existence of

the Brothers, it cannot truly be asserted that there is no shadow of evidence of the fact, there being really a nexus of circumstantial evidence, not half of which has been, or can be, referred to here, which will be more or less convincing to each mind, according to the spirit in which it is weighed and examined.

I say of which not one-half can here be referred to—I might say one-tenth, for the chain consists mainly of a thousand small occurrences, which, taken singly, might be rejected as coincidences, but which cumulatively distinctly amount to evidence. To explain my meaning I will notice one little incident which has occurred whilst I have been writing this letter and in connection with it, and which moreover you can verify, for Mr. B.—— is a member of your own branch, is well known to you, and resides in the same station as yourself.

About a week ago I had occasion to write to him in reply to a letter of his, pointing out, as I have done above to you, the conditions that we were told were essential to obtaining direct communication with the Brothers; and that till those conditions were fulfilled no one had a right to complain of not being visited by these.

Three days ago, whilst pondering over the reply I should make to your letter—feeling, on the one hand, how strong my own belief was in the existence of the Brothers, and on the other, how difficult it was to convey to you any adequate idea of the multitude of circumstances out of which that belief has grown up—I could not help thinking to myself: "Well, really if the Brothers do exist and want people to believe in them, they would surely do well to give some few of us some such unmistakeable evidence as should enable us to say, not as now that we believe they exist, but that we *know* it of our own personal knowledge;" and I wished with all my power that they would in some way give me some help out of the difficulty in which I felt that I was placed.

Now I need not remind you that Madame Blavatsky is some 1,500 miles away from me, and nearly as far from you and Mr. B. But I may say that my letter to him contained no allusion to my difficulties, and that no one here or elsewhere (unless the Brothers) knew anything of my perplexities. Yet, whilst to-day writing this letter, I received a letter from Mr. B., who, after thanking me for mine, says: "After perusal and thinking over its contents I felt a desire to take a pencil and write, in my usual manner, *willing* that I should obtain some communication from my inner self, and this, of which I send you a copy as therein desired, was what I got :—"

Communication with the mysterious Brotherhood.

"This, the most important feature in the Society of "Theosophists, is a subject of deep interest to many, "if not all, its fellows; and why? Because they all "desire to prove to themselves that there is such a "Brotherhood, and that they hope thereby to convince "themselves of the reality of occultism. A most "mistaken notion; is it possible for the mysteries of "nature to hang upon so slight a thread, *viz.*, the "existence of some Adepts? Did not nature possess "those laws at its very creation? Or has it acquired "them only from the time that the Adepts have "formed a lodge of their own? True that the Bre- "thren guide and direct you, and lead you on the "rugged path they have traversed with much self- "sacrifice; but it is only humane charity which "induces them to do so, and because they desire to "benefit those who are in darkness, and for no gain "to themselves. It is only when they see a willing "object that they take him in hand; their rules are "strict, that is no fault of their's; nature teaches "them these rules, and they are bound to adhere to "them. They are not bound to communicate with "every one, no more than any man may take or "not to another. Nature may command them to "visit you and give instruction and disclose some of "its mysteries; but can it be a fault if they do not "repeat their visits? The searcher of truth should

" not look out for these Adepts. Every flower and " living thing on earth has a hidden secret. Man has " one in himself; let him search his own power and he " will find an ample store of marvels which all the " Adepts put together cannot produce, if he can only " be so purified as to reach that perfected state that is " absolutely necessary for such phenomena. Now " then that I have defended the Brethren, I have to " tell you that you must not hope to see them as you " have hoped. Hope for success to see wonderful things, " and that is all; and perchance a Brother may be " deputed to instruct you as others are instructed. " Send this to Mr. X."

Now there is nothing remarkable in this *per se;* the only remarkable point is, that Mr. B., who has never sent me any paper before, of whom I know little, and who could not possibly have had any idea of my perplexities, should, on the precise day on which I was mentally abusing the Brothers for their, as I confess it often seems to me, strangely unbusiness-like and round-about way of doing business, conceive himself impelled to write and to be directed to send me a copy of what is an answer to *much of* my mental address to the Brothers.

You will say, " Strange, certainly, but a mere coincidence,"—so be it; but when these little coincidences, trivial in themselves, are constantly recurring, I personally find much difficulty in avoiding the conclusion which they cumulatively point to, *viz.*, that they are the result of design, and not accident, and that there is an intelligent power behind them.

And now before closing I wish to notice some of what I may term the side issues raised in your letter.

You say that Theosophy appears to you to be merely Christianity without Christ.

Now if by Christianity we understand the religion set forth by most of the more important existing

sects—Catholic and Protestant—there might be some grounds for your assertion; but if by Christianity we are to understand the religion actually preached by Christ, then I must differ from you, because *Theosophy* is the very religion preached by Jesus, Sakya Muni, and all great Eastern religious teachers of antiquity, the fundamental doctrines of which are, "a life beyond the grave," and "the inevitable reaction in the next life, upon what survives of man after death, of all the good or evil done by it in this life."

These were admittedly the cardinal doctrines preached by Gautama Buddha, and these, as you may verify for yourself from the first three Gospels, were the cardinal doctrines preached by Jesus. You have only to read Matthew, v, 3-12, 43-48; vi & vii, xii, 50; xiii, 41-43; xix, 16-22; xxv, 31-46; and parallel passages, to see that, despite isolated texts, on which a different construction may be put, the real essence of Christ's Christianity was, "they that have done evil shall go into everlasting (or prolonged) punishment, and they that have done good into Life eternal (or of long duration)." Not those, he said, who called him Lord, Lord, *i.e.*, who professed belief in *him*, but those who *did* the will of His Father in heaven, *i.e.*, did good, were to reap this reward.

The doctrine of vicarious expiation of wrong-doing—of the atonement in fact—now supposed to be the cornerstone of Christianity, was evolved long after Christ's own time by a section of the then Church, so much so that it was quite unknown to some of the early fathers, and rejected by others, whom, in consequence, the existing Churches, which are the off-spring of that section, have ever regarded as heterodox or heretic.

So you cannot call Theosophy either Buddhism without Buddha, or Christianity without Christ; it is Buddhism without the legends with which the Bud-dhist Churches have, as years rolled by, disfigured the fair fabric of their founder; it is Christianity

without the doctrines with which Christian Churches have overloaded the simple purity of *their* founder's work; it is a fresh outburst from that primeval font of sacred truth in which both Buddhism and Christianity, and a hundred other creeds, whose names even have long been forgotten, had their source. Such at least is the contention of the supposed Brothers!

You seem to think that the value of the system of religious philosophy, in which we are being gradually indoctrinated, must depend wholly upon conclusive proof of the existence of the Brothers, and of the possession by them of powers which enable them to verify by actual knowledge the supposed facts embodied in that philosophy. In other words, you hold that without such conclusive proof, the system of philosophy supposed to emanate from them must necessarily be worthless. But this appears to me an altogether erroneous view. Without such proof, we cannot accept that philosophy as *certainly* true; but if we find it to constitute an all-embracing consistent whole, furnishing a rational credible explanation of all the puzzles of the universe,—such as the origin of evil of which no other system has ever given any rational solution—if we find that while manifestly the source out of which ancient creeds arose from two to three thousand years ago, it yet harmonizes perfectly with, and elucidates every fact that modern science and modern spiritualism have established—we may well value it highly as the best hypothesis yet put forward, and accept it as more probably true, and therefore more deserving of careful study, than any other.

I do not assert that all this is true of this philosophy; I know as yet too little of it. I can only say, that so far as I have gone it seems to me to be so; but what I desire to impress upon you is, that no uncertainty as to the Brothers *necessarily* renders the philosophy valueless, but that, on the contrary, it *may* prove to possess inherent claims on our reason, quite

independent of the source from which it is or is supposed to be derived.

You say: "If this Society had been founded by such a Brotherhood, it would have been far more wisely administered; its leaders would have led higher and more consistent lives; its organ would not have been so often disfigured by passages which must revolt every sensible mind, every kind heart; and, lastly, its real founders would have taken means of thoroughly demonstrating their existence to some few at any rate of their more prominent supporters."

Now as regards the latter point, I need not again go over the ground already traversed. To the best of my belief none of the European supporters of the Society have yet led the lives declared to be essential to such conclusive demonstration, though several are now trying to do so, and this point therefore goes for nothing. But as regards the founders living higher and more consistent lives, I scarcely follow you. Could any mere man have led a purer, better life than Col. Olcott has done since he landed in India? I have been able to watch his life closely for weeks, I may say months; he has been, to quote your expression, "*en evidence*" day and night since his arrival with crowds ever round him, the majority eager to detect any frailty or misconduct. Yet after several years, what are the most serious shortcomings that he can be charged with? First, that he has written three or four letters or paragraphs, in the regular Yankee—journalist (to our ideas)—bad-form style. Second, that he has spoken and written of certain Christian priests in an angry and unbecoming tone. That abused and insulted in the grossest manner by these very priests, he should have partly lost his temper and have retaliated, even comparatively mildly, is to be regretted; it is contrary to the doctrines of Theosophy, as much as the language used by some of those whose insults he resented, was opposed to the teachings of Christ; but he is not merely, like the Adepts themselves, only a man, but he has as yet

surmounted only one of the many steps by which the lowest platform of adeptship has to be reached, and can therefore any trivial shortcomings of this nature be either wondered at or constitute any real argument against the Brothers?

For, understand clearly, that the Brothers declare that they work with nature and by natural means. Nature does not instantaneously produce the gigantic pine or the mature oak. She sows many seeds, many do not germinate at all, some few germinate, and thence slowly the tree develops, through innumerable vicissitudes, with many a check, many a broken branch; and whilst many generations of leaves come and go, it gradually grows and matures. So with all their works; they use, as a rule, no phenomenal means; they work only with ordinary instruments. They, too, sow many seeds, and leave them to germinate or not, and for the rest mainly trust to natural causes for the developments they have in view, though, like the forester, they may here and there intervene in special cases to supplement the powers of nature or avert catastrophies that these appear to be bringing round. They never for one moment pretend to have the time or means to supervise details.

It was desired by one, at any rate, amongst the Adepts, himself educated in the West, to afford some glimpses to that West, now fast sinking in a Dead sea of materialism, of those spiritual truths of which the Brotherhood are the custodians.

It was difficult in the last degree to find any person fitted to become a missionary in the cause. Admitting unhesitatingly, as they always do, that Madame Blavatsky is by no means in all respects what they should have desired, they yet affirm that she was on the whole the fittest instrument available. Possessing in some degree, as an inheritance from an Adept ancestor, the special capacity requisite for great success in occult studies; having spent the

greater part of her life in attempts to penetrate these secrets for which she ever felt an innate yearning; having been at last led to Tibet, and there having been thoroughly grounded in the science, and having risen several steps on the ladder; and above all despising utterly all wordly objects, and being heart and soul devoted to their service in absolute singleness of heart, the Adepts considered that, despite her excitable temperament, and other similar shortcomings (for which, as we know, she is perpetually being chided and rebuked), she was on the whole the best person they could get to set the work they had in view on foot.

America was chosen as the start point; because of all Western countries, America is the one in which, owing to the wide diffusion of spiritualistic experiences, materialism was most easy to combat. Disapproving, owing to its dangers, as explained in Fragments of Occult Truth No. 1, any general practice of so-called spiritualistic investigations, the Brothers yet recognize that it serves to awaken a belief in the occurrence of "phenomena," and may thus serve as a ground-work on which their philosophy, which furnishes the true explanation of these, may be built up.

Later branches were established in Western European countries. That the results have been far from satisfactory is admitted—the explanation being that, with few exceptions, Western people are not willing, and many of them (surrounded and smothered by the antagonistic aura, emanating from the worldly-minded multitude in the midst of which they dwell), are utterly unable to lead the lives essential to any progress—and it was decided to transfer the real head-quarters of the Society to India, the people of which possessed greater natural capacities, as already explained, for the assimilation of its doctrines.

The Brothers are only men; as we understand there have been great differences of opinion as to

this whole matter. *Very* few cared to try to enlighten the West (which they look upon as too deeply immersed in scientific materialism to be worth wasting efforts on) for the sake of the West itself; but some, who cared little for the West as such, thought that any action there might re-act favourably here, where the ruling classes are Westerns. All more or less approved the work amongst natives here, though many held that any permanent good effects were extremely doubtful, but only one desired to associate Europeans in the work. As, however, he was the originator of the Society, his view to a certain extent prevailed. It was soon, however, found that, in the absence of European co-operation, suspicions were created in the minds of the rulers as to there being hidden political designs underlying the avowed objects of the Society; and, further, that the vast majority of the natives themselves were averse to taking part in what, so long as Europeans of education and position held aloof, must necessarily be looked upon with disfavour by their rulers.

Hence the Eclectic Branch, accepted by one Brother, of more cosmopolitan views, with pleasure as possibly opening a way to his cherished design of disseminating truth amongst the Western peoples, but by the majority, with distrust, if not positive dislike, as a possible, though doubtful, means of promoting this dissemination in the East.

Europeans must not forget, in considering the circumstances of the case, this serious difference of opinion that exists in regard to us in high places. We have only one Brother, so far as I can learn, really favourably and lovingly disposed towards us for our own sakes—really desiring to help us and smooth the path for us to higher things; and he is so tied down by his superiors that he can do but little, while as for the rest they only tolerate us, for the sake of the possible good that may be done through us.

Not gratifying this certainly; but still one cannot help feeling that, if the good be done, all else signifies little.

But to return: You must see that working, as the Brothers profess to do, refusing to meddle with details, planting only the seed, and then allowing it to germinate and the plant to grow, without their interference, save in very exceptional cases, and broadly speaking, in accordance with all natural circumscribing influences, your argument against their existence, founded on the errors which have been patent in the administration of the Society and the editing of its organ, and even on the short-comings of the nominal founders, falls to the ground. The Brothers, having set the thing going through the best available, though by no means perfectly qualified, agents, leave it to develop naturally as best it may, refusing to descend *dei ex machina* to modify and neutralize natural causes and results, save and except when some *nodus*, truly *vindice dignus*, occurs.

You lay great stress upon the fact that two of our most prominent European Theosophists distinctly declined to assert that the Brothers did exist; but could you now, with the additional light thus thrown upon the position, reasonably expect any more definite assurances than they gave you? They have not lived the lives, though they may be trying to do so, and they therefore do *not* KNOW that the Brothers exist, any more than you or I do. They only believe that they do, as I do likewise; and what more then could any of us say than they said then and I have now said?

As to the communications supposed to be received from the Brothers, I cannot altogether agree with you. Some of them *do* seem to me beyond the capacity of Madame Blavatsky, so far as I have been able to gauge this, though I quite admit that she is so clever a woman that in this I may be mistaken. Many of them, if carefully thought over and their hidden

sense worked out, contain a great deal more than at first meets the eye. None of them are objectionable or in any way inconsistent with the general doctrines of the Brotherhood as taught us, and many of them were admittedly dashed off in an incomprehensibly short space of time.

As to exceptionally high intellectual powers, they would be the last to claim anything of the kind ; and, looking to the fact that they are mostly sprung from races in which pure intellect has for ages been as little cultivated as physical science, I do not see how we could expect it.

Again, I repeat, they are not gods—only men, who naturally gifted with peculiar organizations, but not by any means necessarily with high intellectual powers, have, by a life of repression and self-sacrifice, and under a special long-continued course of training, so developed and enfranchised certain psychic powers latent in all men, as to be able to penetrate and discover the mysteries of that real and eternal, though unseen universe, on the surface of which floats the illusory, transitory, visible universe, which, to us ordinary mortals, is all in all. They *can* know anything they desire, just as you can learn any physical science you please ; but they do only know what they investigate, just as you only know that science you study, and their efforts are chiefly directed towards the reverification for themselves of the solutions which their predecessors have recorded of the great problems of the universe: What am I? Whence do I come? Whither do I go? What is the moving power of the universe? and the like. It is not anything that we call knowledge; it is not high intellectual powers, but the awakened and liberated condition of certain spiritual elements that enter into man's composition, that enables them to investigate and solve these problems, partly by actual observation and partly by direct intercourse with entities occupying far higher and less material platforms than this world. They are not polyglots; they

cannot speak all languages; they may be able to understand anything ever written in any language, by laboriously forcing back their own thought into a junction with the thoughts out of which that writing originated; but, so far as we know, only one of them, who was partly educated in England, (there may be others of whom we know nothing) really *knows* English well.

They can dissect the mind of any individual man and search its most hidden recesses where the necessity arises for this laborious process; but of mankind *en masse*, of the ways, thoughts and springs of conduct of modern Society, European or Native, they seem to know little. Never mixing with the world, thoroughly despising it and all its shows, they are eminently unpractical people; and now that they are beginning to wish to come a little out of the darkness and solitude in which for ages they and their predecessors have been impenetrably veiled, and through chosen instruments diffuse some rays of the priceless knowledge of things spiritual they possess, they seem to know very little how to set about it and to be so fettered, partly by rules and partly by the prejudices of the older and higher members of the fraternity, as to be unable, or unwilling, to act upon the advice of those of us who, mere pigmys to them in psychic science and its revelations, yet know far better than they do what this every-day world of ours is like, and how alone, constituted as society now is, it can be successfully operated on in the sense that they desire.

So far from the communications received, tending to disprove the existence of the Brothers, they are precisely what might have been expected from a body, such as they are alleged to be. They contain arguments which, from an outsider's point of view, and looked at in their wordly bearing, are certainly too feeble for a woman of Madame Blavatsky's ability and worldly experience to have soberly put forward, and yet which, if you by a mental effort work yourself

round to the peculiar position which the Brothers describe themselves as occupying, you at once understand appear to them conclusive. Their letters are often what we should call ill argued, because they know nothing of argument. On any or every point, they either accept what their fellows, who have investigated the point, tell them, or investigate it for themselves. They can make certain if they chose of anything and everything relating to those matters which are all in all to them, and there is, therefore, no room for practice in argument. They betray an ignorance of modern society, of what can and cannot be done in it, greater even than that of our unsophisticated founders ; and they are as full of *non possumus* as any Papal utterance. But with all this they contain very remarkable passages, touching on their science-philosophy, which open out to all of us quite new vistas of thought, and seem to throw light on what have been life-long puzzles; and though we cannot affirm that these might not possibly have been written by Madame Blavatsky, still in two years' acquaintance, and many months of daily and hourly intercourse with her, we have seen nothing to justify our attributing to her the capacity requisite for their composition.

So that independent of the phenomenal manner in which several of these communications have been received, they do, if rightly considered, contain internal evidence of being the productions of people such as the Brothers describe themselves to be.

You rejected the dilemma I offered you, and presented me in your turn with another; but this latter I must similarly reject, having shown, as I think, that the phenomena are *not* really explicable on any theory of Madame Blavatsky's mediumistic powers, using the word in its accepted sense.

I therefore return to my original position, and submit that either the Brothers exist, or Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott, to say nothing of Padshah,

Damodar, Moorad Ali Beg, &c., &c., &c., are impostors, and I repeat my question, " if imposture, *cui bono ?*"

You contend (though you admit that you do not believe such to be the case) that the hope of making money *may* have been amongst their objects for the imposture. Now it is always possible to suppose " low motives unto noble deeds ;" but whether any rational man will accept such suppositions will depend upon whether they at all harmonize with the other circumstances of the case. In the present instance, this money-making theory is utterly opposed to all the facts known to us. Whatever shortcomings may be charged against the founders, no one can pretend that, from first to last, they have ever shown the smallest regard for money or anything money can purchase. Had money-making entered in the smallest degree into even their original programme, it would have been impossible for them to avoid allowing this desire to peep out at some time or other.

I need scarcely notice your remark that their Magazine, *The Theosophist*, might, if well managed, " have proved a valuable property and yielded a large income." You cannot seriously suppose that they gave up everything, she in Russia and both in America, for a Magazine speculation in India! Subsequent to the close of the American war, Col. Olcott, we understand, enjoyed a large professional income, and certainly his social and public standing in America were such as to promise him any reward there, within an ordinary citizen's grasp, that he could desire. Madame Blavatsky, too, could earn infinitely more by literary work by writing for other journals than she ever could hope to do by writing, as she does almost exclusively, for her own. Moreover she voluntarily relinquished a considerable patrimony some years ago to relatives to devote herself unfettered to occult pursuits. It was never poverty, or even " comparative poverty," that " debarred *her* from making a figure in the world ;" for, born in a noble family, and moving always till

she voluntarily turned aside from worldly objects, in the very best society; she has always had, and still retains, numbers of friends amongst the highest ranks in her own country.

For a practical man your arguments in these matters are certainly the feeblest I ever read. Fancy a man saying: "How can any one possibly be sure that the moon is not made of green cheese," and having said this, concluding that he had gone some way towards establishing the possibility of such being the fact; but such precisely has been your line of argument.

But further on you yourself reject the money-making theory, and say that in such a case the love of notoriety would probably prove to be the real inducement. But have you considered that if that *had* been their motive power they would scarcely have left New York, where their doings and sayings, and their Society and its aims and objects, were canvassed by every journal, and where, owing to the wide diffusion of, and prevalent belief in, spiritualistic notions, far more interest was felt in the matter than could possibly have been expected in any other quarter of the globe? Admitting that they have in some places received, and might fairly have expected to receive everywhere, a kindly welcome from the natives of the country, they must equally have known that nowhere in India could they expect to be so much objects of attention as they already were in America. And, again, who that has lived with them, or in close intercourse with them, can have failed to notice the lives they lead of perpetual never-ceasing labour and toil, and that toil not in directions that would be most likely to enhance their own names and fame, or increase that notoriety you fondly deem their probable object, but in the silent struggle to make all within their influence happier and better.

None of *us* can certainly read the hearts of our fellows; but if we may, as in practice the whole of

mankind does, draw any conclusions as to the secret workings of the hearts of others, from all they say and do, and from all they abstain from saying and doing, we may certainly conclude that it was no love of notoriety, of being, as you phrase it, ***somebody*** that led Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott to our shores, or that has since sustained them in their persevering labours, in the face of a bigoted opposition and a malignity of calumny almost without parallel in India.

You lay particular stress on a letter of Madame Blavatsky's *(vide p. 86)* narrating one of her early psychical experiences, and you seem to conclude from this that Madame Blavatsky admits having been a medium in youth. But if you will re-read this more carefully you will see that the whole tenor of her letter is to show the folly of the idea of obtaining proofs of spirit identity by the abnormal communications supposed by spiritualists to come from spirits of deceased persons.

Moreover, do you not perceive that, if Madame Blavatsky were an impostor—and I think I have shown that if the Brothers do not exist and the whole matter is not in the main true, (the phenomena that have occurred not being explicable on any mediumistic theory) she ***must*** be an impostor—the very last thing she would have done (knowing how constantly and generally she has been suspected and accused of writing the communications supposed to have come from the Brothers), would have been to volunteer an account of an experience, involving the capacity on her part to write in handwritings utterly distinct from her own normal one?

No one will pretend that she is a fool; no one who knows her can deny her cleverness or rapidity of seizing every phase of a chain of circumstances, every aspect of any idea or fact. Had she really been an impostor, were she really the writer of these communications, it is as certain as anything

in this world of delusions can be, that she would never have acknowledged, much less herself have volunteered, this early experience of hers.

Of course you avoided this really strong argument by the hypothesis that she was not an impostor, only an unconscious and deceived medium ; but I have already shown, I think, that this hypothesis is absolutely irreconcilable with the known facts, and I must, therefore, claim this letter as a confirmation, rather than the reverse, of the existence of the Brothers.

Finally—and this seems your strong point, and from the energy with which you put it, you would really seem yourself to have come in for some little plain speaking on her part,—you insist on defects in poor MadameBlavatsky's part, as a conclusive proof of her not being the missionary of any such people as you conceive the Brothers to be. You say: " Wherever she goes, her irascible temper, her want of charity to all who oppose or doubt her, her dogmatic and imperious spirit and vehemence of speech are noticed;" and, though you admit " her kindliness of heart, love of justice, hatred of injustice, and oppression and sincere desires for the welfare of her fellow creatures," you hold the existence of those defects which you attribute to her, to be conclusive evidence that she cannot be the emissary of such people as the Brothers.

Now, in the first place, for the twentieth time, the Brothers themselves are only men, not gods, not angels, and some of them not even what I should consider altogether saints. One, at any rate, with whom we have communicated (the very one so beloved by Col. Olcott, and of whom he speaks so enthusiastically) is apparently quite as dogmatic and imperious and far less polite than his poor *chela* Madame Blavatsky ever has been or could be. He can seldom avoid some fling at the stupidity of us, "*Pelings*," as they designate all Europeans, as compared with natives, when some abstruse metaphysical idea has to be seized. They are purified men,

free from earthly sins, cares and desires, but to each clings some shadow of what the man was out of which they developed, and in this case the raw material was a haughty Rajpoot, intolerant of all opposition, and thoroughly hating and despising Europeans. He does not now really hate or despise any one; he wishes all men well; he would not hurt a fly, but still some flavour of the old man clings about him.

Another is as gentle as a lamb, and quite saint-like in all his expressions. Another, a far higher one, is as grim and hard as any Calvin.

They are men, greatly purified from earthly taints, and standing high above us—ordinary mortals,—in virtue of their enfranchised psychic elements; but they are still men, and consequently none of them absolutely exempt from some one of the minor weaknesses inherent in human nature.

If the Brothers be so—and this is what they tell us of themselves—is it reasonable to deny their existence because some of their employés exhibit similar or even far more serious weaknesses?

But, again, admitting a substratum of truth, I contend that there is a serious exaggeration in your strictures on poor Madame Blavatsky. At times, like most other women, she is irritable and fractious, but it soon passes, and I have never discovered a trace of any malicious or revengeful spirit in her. When suddenly some new and outrageous calumny bursts on her, she at times gets very angry, and shows a great disposition either to abuse her assailants roundly or to sit down and write the reverse of a meek reply. But if she does either, she is always sorry for it afterwards; and very often, when she is in a better mood, she takes no notice of attacks that would anger even saints.

When you know yourself to have sacrificed everything in life, for the hope of being able to spread

truth and do good to your fellows,—when, despising comfort and enjoyment, you are toiling day and night (and how she works all who have enjoyed her acquaintance well know) in the purely unselfish desire to benefit others—it *is*, to say the least, aggravating to see yourself continually denounced, in the public prints, by anonymous writers as a swindler, impostor, liar, and what not. The true philosopher would pass it over with a smile; but she has not one grain of this philosophic temperament; the very organization which renders her (in some other respects so ill qualified) so specially capable of success in occult pursuits, is utterly incompatible with a calm philosophic serenity. That later as the result of the influence which the Brothers exert over her she may attain this, is possible; but she is still too far down to have altogether conquered this inherent weakness. Had she done so, she would not be amongst us now.

And after all, nothing is more certain than that if her bitterest calumniator came to her next day, sick or in trouble, she would strive as hard to relieve him as though he had been a friendly supporter.

Like every one else she has faults, and owing to her disregard for appearances, she shows them more freely than any ordinary person would; but her faults, as far as I can judge, lie on the surface; and in essentials she is, it seems to me, a far better woman than the majority of her neighbours, and infinitely better than with her very peculiar physical and mental organization she could possibly have been, were not the cause in which all her hopes are bound up, in her belief, a true and good one.

There are three grievous stumbling blocks to those even who are disposed to believe in Madame Blavatsky and the Brothers, which, although not directly alluded to by you, may properly be noticed.

The one is the manner in which, to some, the

society or its founders, appear to have continually changed front.

One man says: "I came out to India with Madame Blavatsky and joined the Society at its inception at Bombay, and all I can say is, I never heard a hint of the Brothers." Another says: "When three years ago I took much interest in the Society and saw a great deal of the founders, it was all Hindoo Yoginism, the Vedas and the Vedantas. Never a word was breathed about Buddhism, which is now represented as the purest and least corrupted offspring of the Primeval Truth." Another says: "When I knew them there was no hint of their being mere puppets moved helplessly by hidden wire pullers," and so on.

But this is not a real difficulty, because this is exactly in accordance with what the Brothers describe as their invariable course of action. They never burst on the world with a grand surprise. No Minerva, armed cap-à-pie, issues from their brains; they never lay their hands on the table, but slowly play card by card as the game proceeds. They let every scheme grow slowly, develop by degrees, nay, as in the tree, one branch spreads out in this direction and later another in another, and, acted upon by surrounding influences, even the trunk gets now a crook this way, now a bend that, and yet, on the whole, the broad result is upward progress; so do they allow their designs to expand, irregularly, often as it would seem for a while in a wrong direction, and yet with the ultimate result of perfect maturity. The Society, as we now view it and understand it, is a wholly different thing to what any of us could have conceived a few years ago; and probably a few years hence it will again look very different. And here one point must be noticed: just as the Brothers must not be held responsible for the blundering in details, due to the so-called founders' imperfections, so neither must the founders be abused for letting people conceive erroneous ideas of what the ultimate aims and scope of the Society are; they can only divulge

what they are allowed to tell, they must conceal or evade everything that so far their leaders and masters do not deem it expedient to be revealed. As was distinctly said in answer to some outside comments on Col. Olcott's supposed want of mental capacity to grasp certain metaphysical problems: "He had either to appear a fool, or to speak on what he was forbidden to speak about;" and as time has rolled on, the very person who made the comments that elicited this reply has come to acknowledge that this does look as if it were in fact the real explanation of a good many things that have from time to time shaken our faith.

Moreover it has to be noted that the Society has never changed front in the sense of departing from one definite plan. The "higher knowledge" which the founders preach may be attained under any exoteric religion, no matter what its external symbols, rites or creed, provided only that the universal esoteric method be followed. So to Hindus they show an upward path through the Vedic philosophical methods, and to the Buddhist they trace it through the Pitikas. Quite recently the President demonstrated to an enthusiastic audience of Parsees that Zarathustra had known and followed that same path to the end, and were the plain teachings of the New Testament less encrusted with mediæval dogmas, and Christian sects less intolerant, he might well show to Christians that this knowledge was shared by the founder of *their* religion, and that even Paul (almost more the founder of English Christianity than Jesus himself) was an initiate and a Theosophist in the most rigid application of the name.

The founders, true to the old Theosophic maxim, desire to be all things to all men; they have no wish to draw any man from the faith of his fathers; they only desire to show each that, if he will only seek it, deep in the penetralia of his own creed, lies the higher knowledge, the saving truth; and if in dealing now with one race or nationality, now

with another, they seem to lean, now more to this, now more to that religious philosophical system, this is only in strict consonance with the key-note of the Society—impartial eclecticism.

As to what is said of the founders being mere puppets, &c., this scarcely deserves notice. They have enlisted in an army mobilized to battle against priest-craft, bigotry and falsehood, and like all good soldiers they obey their officers. If it comes to that, every soldier, every general of a division even, is a mere puppet, moved helplessly by a wire puller, (quite hidden for the most part *to the enemy,*) to wit, the General Commanding in Chief.

The second is the, to us, lamentable, but incontestible fact that Madame Blavatsky's converse is by no means confined to "yea, yea, and nay, nay;" but is, especially when she is in one of her less spiritual and more worldly moods, only too fluent and too often replete with contradictions, inaccuracies and at times apparently distinct mis-statements. Nothing has staggered all of us more. "How," we have felt and said, "is such looseness and inaccuracy of speech reconcilable with her being the instrument of such a Brotherhood?" I confess that for long the warmest of her friends saw no solution of this riddle, which is one that so immediately suggests itself to all who become intimate with her that even Col. Olcott, summarising the general feeling, once said: "Her best friends believe in her despite of herself!"

But gradually we have come to learn that this great defect in her, considered as a leader of such a movement, is the result of two tendencies inherent in her present mental organization, which, though always to some extent kept in check and at times entirely subdued by the training she has undergone, and by those who guide and direct her, are yet ineradicable (at any rate until she has progressed higher on the ladder) and always liable to burst forth when the conditions around her are unfavorable.

Of course, even her own particular spiritual pastor has much to do besides looking after her; he or others of the Brothers set her in the right groove and tell her generally what to do, and on particular or important occasions, personally strengthen her; and they scold and rebuke her (making no secret of their full knowledge of all her shortcomings and stumblings, in their letters to us) for all her deviations from the path; but as a rule she is, within certain limits, left to her own devices, and then it is that these inherent tendencies are allowed to come into play.

These tendencies are, first, inaccuracy. Most women are inaccurate, but she is perhaps more than normally so, instead of, as one might have expected, less so. The fact is, Madame Blavatsky is alas! no longer what she once was; she has lived a life of considerable hardships; she has undergone a course of training and study that few, if any, minds go through unscarred; her health has been failing for years; she suffers morbidly from the vulgar slander with which she has been assailed on all sides; her memory is undoubtedly impaired, and not unfrequently I believe she quite *unconsciously*, in the course of conversation, makes incorrect, if not absolutely false, statements.

But the second tendency, a sort of humorous combativeness, leads her at times, especially when she is in high spirits and entirely free from higher influences, to propound absolute fictions of malice prepense. She has only to discover that those talking to her are chaffing her, suspecting her of fraud or disbelieving some true statement of hers, to at once assume the attitude of the sailor lad, who, on discovering that his granny considered him a liar in the matter of flying fishes, at once reeled off to her Pharoah's Chariot wheels and similar marvels. This habit is, in her position, much to be regretted, the more so that even those who know her best can never be sure at such times whether she is in fun or in earnest, whether she is telling a truth or

simply bamboozling an adversary; but it exists and has led to more "occasion to the enemy to blaspheme" than perhaps any other of the earthly frailties, that still slightly disfigure a life, otherwise *most* beautiful for its purity and utter unselfishness.

It is only just to remark that, when seriously discussing matters with those really interested in the work, or again when specially strengthened for such discussions with any one, or when immediately under the influence of her directors, no trace of these frailties are apparent, and no inconsistencies or contradictions occur in her statements.

But there has been, at any rate to those in the inner circle, a greater source of difficulty and doubt than even this last, and that has consisted in the fact of the Brothers themselves having, at times, apparently formed very erroneous conceptions of the state of mind of some of those with whom they were dealing. How, it was naturally asked, can this be reconcilable with their pretensions? The explanation seems to lie in the fact already referred to, *viz.*, that all psychic investigations involve the expenditure of psychic force; and that this being quickly exhaustible even in Adepts, just as the physical force is in an ordinary man, the Brothers do not, in the majority of cases, go to the labour of diving into a man's mind, but either themselves judge of it from his doings and sayings, much as an ordinary man would do, or accept the views on this point of some mind completely in their hands, or under their control, (from which they can take what they want as from a cupboard), which has had opportunities of forming a presumably correct opinion. This is the explanation at which we, at any rate, have arrived; and, as in other matters which for a time have equally disquieted us, we shall probably learn, in course of time, that while it is partly correct, it needs some additions and modifications to make it perfectly accurate.

If after all you reply, as you once formerly did, "you don't seem to be quite certain of the existence of

the Brothers yourself," I can only admit that this is the case.* All I can say is that, having most carefully considered all the facts of the case, and knowing more about it than any one except some half dozen persons (who I may add share my conclusions), I am decidedly of the opinion that the existence of a Lodge of persons, such as the Brothers describe themselves to be, is a hypothesis (monstrous as it must seem to all outsiders) less difficult to accept, and more in harmony with the whole body of facts of which we have cognizance, than any other that any one has suggested, or that we, after constant arguments amongst ourselves and with outsiders during the last twelve months, have been able to construct.

Yours sincerely,

H. X.

January 2nd, 1882.

P.S.—Since this was written my friend, Mr. ——— has forwarded to me the enclosed letter and certificate, which constitute, *quantum valeat*, another piece of evidence in favour of the existence of the Brothers:—

(Letter.)

BOMBAY,

December 28th, 1881.

MY DEAR———

I am glad to be able to send you the testimony of still another witness who has seen my *Chohan*, and under most favourable circumstances.

This seems to be almost as near a test case as one could expect to have. I never saw the Brother looking more splendid than he did to-night in the bright moonlight.

* This was all I could say when this letter was written; *now* I can say that I am *quite* certain of the existence of the Brothers, and so may every human being become, who will live the life and exercise the psychical faculties with which he has been endowed by nature.—H. X.—*June* 1882.

Mr. R. is a Brahman of the highest caste (his brother or cousin is, I believe, chief priest to the Maharajah of Travancore), and he is intensely interested in Occultism.

Yours, &c.,
H. S. OLCOTT.

(Certificate.)

BOMBAY,
December 28th, 9 p.m., 1881.

The undersigned, returning a few moments since from a carriage ride with Madame Blavatsky, saw, as the carriage approached the house, a man upon the balcony over the *porte-cochére*, leaning against the balustrade, and with the moonlight shining full upon him. He was dressed in white, and wore a white *Fehta* on his head. His beard was black, and his long black hair hung to his breast. Olcott and Damodar at once recognized him as the "Illustrious."* He raised his hand and dropped a letter to us. Olcott jumped from the carriage and recovered it. It was written in Tibetan characters, and signed with his familiar cypher. It was a message to Ramaswamier, in reply to a letter (in a closed envelope) which he had written to the Brother a short time before we went out for the ride. M. Coulomb, who was reading inside the house, and a short distance from the balcony, neither saw nor heard any one pass through the apartment, and no one else was in the bungalow, except Madame Coulomb, who was asleep in her bed-room.

Upon descending from the carriage our whole party immediately went upstairs, but the Brother had disappeared.

H. S. OLCOTT.
DAMODAR K. MAVALANKAR.

* A name by which Col. O.'s *Chohan* is known amongst us.—H. X.

The undersigned further certifies to Mr.——— that from the time when he gave the note to Madame Blavatsky until the Brother dropped the answer from the balcony, she was not out of his sight.

S. RAMASWAMIER, F.T.S., B.A.,
District Registrar of Assurances, Tinnevelly.

P.S.—Babula* was below in the *porte-cochere*, waiting to open the carriage door, at the time when the Brother dropped the letter from above. The coachman also saw him distinctly.

S. RAMASWAMIER.
DAMODAR K. MAVALANKAR.
H. S. OLCOTT.

Now in itself and standing alone this might go for little, but as one of a string of similar attestations, which have been previously published, it is certainly evidence. You cannot suppose that all these men of high caste and good position, with nothing to gain and everything to lose, by such avowals, are impostors; nor is it easy to see how in such a case a man can be deceived. From the time Mr. Ramaswamier gave his letter to Madame Blavatsky to the time he received his answer she was never out of his sight. Therefore *she* could not have written the letter, and there is no other person about the place who can write Tibetan.

I don't say this is conclusive. I merely say that it is by a multitude of occurrences of this and similar natures that (although ourselves never having seen one) we of the Eclectic society have been led to consider that the existence of the Brothers is more probable than the reverse.

H. X.

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* Madame Blavatsky's servant.—H. X.

[Long after the above letter was written, in fact after I had had it set up in type, I received the subjoined, which, now that I am publishing so much about the matter, may as well be published along with the foregoing.

This is another piece of evidence, inconclusive by itself, because not carrying to outsiders the conviction that it may not possibly have been the result of a trick, but still adding, as it were, another link to the chain.

Mr. Ross Scott is by no means a credulous person, and he went down to Bombay intent on satisfying himself whether there was, or was not, any imposture in the matter, so that when he declares himself satisfied that, in this instance, all trickery and imposture were impossible, we may conclude that he did his utmost to make perfectly sure of this.

My correspondent, to whom I have shown this, still declares himself as unconvinced as he was by my letter.

He argues that all these appearances occur only at the head-quarters, where the founders have had months and years in which to make any arrangements they please; and he adds that, if he himself even saw a supposed Brother under similar circumstances at the head-quarters, he should not be one whit more convinced than he is now.

The fact seems to be that many people hold the existence of the Brothers to be so inherently incredible that scarcely any amount of testimony would suffice to induce them to admit and believe its possibility.

I am not of this number. While, no doubt, unable to assert the fact from my own knowledge, I am still decidedly of opinion that the evidence on record is amply sufficient to establish a strong

probability of the fact of the Brothers' existence, and I accept it accordingly provisionally, pending such further developments as time may bring forth.]

H. X.

The undersigned severally certify that, in each other's presence, they recently saw at the head-quarters of the Theosophical Society, a Brother of the First Section, known to them under a name which they are not at liberty to communicate to the public. The circumstances were of a nature to exclude all idea of trickery or collusion, and were as follow:—

We were sitting together in the moonlight about 9 o'clock upon the balcony which projects from the front of the bungalow. Mr. Scott was sitting facing the house, so as to look through the intervening verandah and the library, and into the room at the further side. This latter apartment was brilliantly lighted.

The library was in partial darkness, thus rendering objects in the farther room more distinct. Mr. Scott suddenly saw the figure of a man step into the space, opposite the door of the library; he was clad in the white dress of a Rajput, and wore a white turban. Mr. Scott at once recognised him from his resemblance to a portrait in Col. Olcott's possession. Our attention was then drawn to him, and we all saw him most distinctly. He walked towards a table, and afterwards turning his face towards us, walked back out of our sight. We hurried forward to get a closer view, in the hope that he might also speak; but when we reached the room, he was gone. We cannot say by what means he departed, but that he did not pass out by the door which leads into the compound we can positively affirm; for that door was full in our view, and he did not go out by it. At the side of the room towards which he walked there was no exit, the only door and the two

windows in that direction having been boarded and closed up. Upon the table, at the spot where he had been standing, lay a letter addressed to one of our number. The handwriting was identical with that of sundry notes and letters previously received from him in divers ways—such as dropping down from the ceiling, &c: the signature was the same as that of the other letters received, and as that upon the portrait above described. His long hair was black and hung down upon his breast; his features and complexion were those of a Rajput.

ROSS SCOTT, B.C.S.
MINNIE J. B. SCOTT.
H. S. OLCOTT.
H. P. BLAVATSKY.
M. MOORAD ALI BEG.
DAMÓDAR K. MAVALANKAR.
BHAVANI SHANKAR GANESH MULLAPOORKAR.

No. 3.—(Letter from Col. Olcott to Mr. H—— X ——)

COLOMBO, CEYLON,
30*th September* 1881.

DEAR MR. X.,

The enclosed card, to the SPIRITUALIST, I had written and put under cover to ——— as early as the 27th instant—post dating so as to correspond with the P. and O. mail day—and meant it to go straight to London by this post. But on the night of that day I was awakened from sleep by my *Chohan* (or *Guru*, the Brother whose immediate pupil I am) and ordered to send it *via* Simla, so that you might read it. He said that it would serve a useful purpose in helping to settle your mind about the objective reality of the Brothers, as you had confidence in my veracity, and, next to seeing them

yourself, would as soon take my word as any other man's to the fact. I have to ask the favour, therefore, of your sending the letter on by the next succeeding post, re-addressed to ——.

I can well understand the difficulty of your position—far better I think than H. P. B., who, woman-like, hates to reason. I have only to go back to the point where I was in 1874, when I first met her, to feel what you require to satisfy you. And so going back, I know that, as I would never have taken anybody's evidence to so astounding a claim as the existence of the Brothers, but required personal experience before I would head the new movement, so must you, a person far more cautious and able than myself, feel now.

I got that proof in due time; but for months I was being gradually led out of my spiritualistic Fool's Paradise, and forced to abandon my delusions one by one. My mind was not prepared to give up ideas that had been the growth of 22 years' experiences, with mediums and circles. I had a hundred questions to ask and difficulties to be solved. It was not until a full year had passed by that I had dug out of the bed-rock of common sense, the Rosetta stone that showed me how to read the riddle of direct intercourse with the Brothers. Until then I had been provoked and exasperated by the—as I thought—selfish and cruel indifference of H. P. B. to my yearnings after the truth, and the failure of the Brothers to come and instruct me. But now it was all made clear. I had got just as much as I deserved, for I *had been ignorantly looking for extraneous help to achieve that which no man ever did achieve except by his own self-development.*

So as the sweetness of common life had all gone out from me, as I was neither hungry for fame nor money, nor love, and as the gaining of this knowledge and the doing good to my fellowmen appeared the highest of all aims to which I could

devote my remaining years of life, I adopted those habits and encouraged those thoughts that were conducive to the attainment of my ends.

After that I had all the proofs I needed, alike of the existence of the Brothers, their wisdom, their psychical powers, and their unselfish devotion to humanity. For six years have I been blessed with this experience, and I am telling you the exact truth in saying that all this time I have known perfect happiness. It has seemed to you " the saddest thing of all" to see me giving up the world and everything that makes the happiness of those living in the world ; and yet after all these years not only not made an adept, but hardly having achieved one step towards adeptship. These were your words to me and others last year ; but if you will only reflect for one moment what it is to transform a worldly man, such as I was in 1874—a man of clubs, drinking parties, mistresses, a man absorbed in all sorts of worldly public and private undertakings and speculations—into that purest, wisest, noblest and most spiritual of human beings—a BROTHER, you will cease to wonder, or rather you will wonder, how I could ever have struggled out of the swamp at all, and how I could have ever succeeded in gaining the firm straight road.

No one knows, until he really tries it, how awful a task it is to subdue *all* his evil passions and animal instincts, and develop his higher nature. Talk of conquering intemperance or a habit of opium-eating—this self-conquest is a far harder task.

I have seen, been taught by, been allowed to visit, and have received visits from the Brothers ; but there have been periods when, relapsing into a lower moral state (interiorly) as the result of most unfavourable external conditions, I have for long neither seen them nor received a line from them. From time to time one or another Brother who had been on friendly terms with me (I am acquainted with

about a dozen in all) has become disgusted with me and left me to others, who kindly took their places. Most of all, I regret, a certain Magyar philosopher, who had begun to give me a course of instruction in occult dynamics, but was repelled by an outbreak of my old earthly nature.

But I shall win him back and the others also, for I have so determined; and *whatever a man really* WILLS, *that he has.* No power in the universe, but one, can prevent our seeing whomsoever we will, or knowing whatsoever we desire, and that power is—SELF!

Throughout my studies I have tried to obtain my proofs in a valid form. I have known mesmerism for a quarter of a century or more, and make every allowance for self-deception and external mental impressions. What I have seen and experienced is, therefore, very satisfactory to myself, though mainly valueless to others.

Let me give you one instance:—

One evening, at New York, after bidding H. P. B. good night, I sat in my bed-room, finishing a cigar and thinking. Suddenly there stood my *Chohan* beside me. The door had made no noise in opening, if it *had* been opened, but at any rate there he was. He sat down and conversed with me in subdued tones for some time, and as he seemed in an excellent humour towards me, I asked him a favour. I said I wanted some tangible proof that he had actually been there, and that I had not been seeing a mere illusion or *maya* conjured up by H. P. B. He laughed, unwound the embroidered Indian cotton *fehta* he wore on his head, flung it to me, and—was gone. That cloth I still possess, and it bears in one corner the initials (——*) of my *Chohan* in thread-work.

* A peculiar monogram, which cannot be reproduced in type—Tibetan I believe—which this Brother always uses.—H. X.

This at least was no hallucination, and so of several other instances I might relate.

This same Brother once visited me in the flesh at Bombay, coming in full day light, and on horseback. He had me called by a servant into the front room of H. P. B.'s bungalow (she being at the time in the other bungalow talking with those who were there). He came to scold me roundly for something I had done in T. S. matters, and as H. B. P. was also to blame, he *telegraphed* to her to come, that is to say he turned his face and extended his finger in the direction of the place she was in. She came over at once with a rush, and seeing him dropped on her knees and paid him reverence. My voice and his had been heard by those in the other bungalow, but only H. P. B. and I, and the servant *saw* him.

Another time, two, if not three, persons, sitting in the verandah of my bungalow in the Girgaum compound, saw a Hindoo gentleman ride in, dismount under H. P. B.'s portico, and enter her study. They called me, and I went and watched the horse until the visitor came out, remounted and rode off. That also was a Brother, in flesh and bones; but what proof is there of it to offer even to a friend like yourself? There are many Hindus and many horses.

You will find in an old number of the *N. Y. World* a long account of a reporter's experiences at our headquarters in 47th Street. Among the marvels witnessed by the eight or ten persons present was the apparition of a Brother who passed by the window and returned. The room was on the second story of the house, and there was no balcony to walk on.

But this, it may be said, was all an illusion; that is the trouble of the whole matter; everything of the kind seen by one person is a delusion, if not a lie, to those who did *not* see it. Each must see for himself, and can alone convince himself.

Feeling this, while obeying my *Chohan*, as I try to do in little as well as great things, and sending you these writings, I do so in the hope, though by no means in the certainty, that your present reliance on my veracity will survive their perusal.

I have never, I should mention, kept a diary of my experiences with the Brothers or even of the phenomena I witnessed in connection with them. There were two reasons for this—first, I have been taught to maintain the closest secrecy in regard to all I saw and heard, except when specially authorised to speak about any particular thing; second, never expecting to be allowed to publish my experiences, I have felt that the less I put on paper the safer.

You may possibly glean, if not from personal observation, at any rate from the printed record of my American services of one kind or another, that I am not the sort of man to give up everything, come out as I did, and keep working on as I have done, without having obtained a superabundance of good proofs of the truth of the cause in which I am embarked. And you may possibly say to yourself: " Why should not I, who am more capable of doing good to this cause than a dozen Olcotts, be also favoured with proofs ?" The answer you must seek from another quarter ; but if my experience is worth anything, I should say that that answer would be in substance that, however great a man may be at this side of the Himalayas, he begins his relationship with the Brothers on exactly the same terms as the humblest *Chela* who ever tried to scale their Parnassus, he must "win his way."

If you only knew how often, within my time even, a deaf ear has been turned to the importunities, both of influential outsiders professing readiness to do everything in the way of personal exertion and liberal gifts, and of our own fellows who pretended to be ready to sacrifice the world if the Brothers

would only come to them and teach them, you would perhaps be less surprised at their failure to visit you.

Events have always proved their wisdom, and so it will be in your case, I fancy; for, if you do see them, as I hope and trust you may, it will be because you have earned the right to *command* their presence.

The phenomena they have done have all had a purpose, and good has eventually come even from those which brought down upon us for the moment the greatest contumely. As for my mistakes of judgment and H. P. B.'s occasional tomfooleries, that is a different affair, and the debits are charged to our respective accounts.

My teachers have always told me that the danger of giving the world complete assurance of their existence is so great, by reason of the low spiritual tone of society, and the ruthless selfishness with which it would seek to drag them from their seclusion, that it is better to tell only so much as will excite the curiosity and stimulate the zeal of the worthy minority of metaphysical students. If they can keep just enough oil in the lamp to feed the flame it is all that is required.

I do not know whether or not there is any significance* in the fact of my *Chohan's* visiting me on the night of the 27th, but you may. He made me rise, sit at my table and write from his dictation †

* There was this significance that, on the afternoon of the 27th, I at Simla had been disputing with Madame Blavatsky, then living in my house, as to whether the Brothers were not a myth and she a self-deluded person, and in the course of the conversation I had remarked that I had never heard Colonel Olcott *say* that he had seen or conversed with a Brother. That Colonel Olcott, then in Ceylon, should have selected that very night to sit down and write to me a communication professedly from a Brother, rebuking me for my incredulity, and should further have added this letter above printed testifying to his own constant direct intercourse with the Brothers, is to say the least a curious coincidence.—H. X.

† The communication thus dictated and transmitted as an enclosure of this letter, is not printed, as it is of a purely private character. But I am bound to say that, to my mind, it embodied a complete misconception as to some points of the position discussed.—H. X.

for an hour or more. There was an expression of anxiety mingled with sternness on his noble face, as there always is when the matter concerns H. P. B., to whom for many years he has been at once a father and a devoted guardian. How I do hope you may see him! You would confess, I am sure, that he was the finest possible type of *man*.

I have also personally known———since 1875. He is of quite a different, a gentler, type, yet the bosom friend of the other. They live near each other with a small Buddhist Temple about midway between their houses.

In New York, I had————'s portrait; my *Chohan's;* that of another Brother, a Southern Indian Prince; and a colored sketch on China silk of the landscape near ————'s and my *Chohan's* residences with a glimpse of the latter's house and of part of the little temple. But the portraits of——— and the Prince disappeared from the frames one night just before I left for India.

I had still another picture, that remarkable portrait of a Yogi about which so much was said in the papers.* It too disappeared in New York, but one

* The following are Extracts from some of the papers, referring to this remarkable picture.—H. X.

City and County of New York, ss.

William Q. Judge, being duly sworn, says that he is an attorney and counseller-at-law, practising at the Bar of the State of New York; that he was present at the house of Madame H. P. Blavatsky, at No. 302, West 47th Street, New York City, on one occasion in the month of December 1877, when a discussion was being held upon the subject of Eastern Magic, especially upon the power of an adept to produce phenomena by an exercise of the will, equalling or surpassing those of mediumship. To illustrate the subject, as she had often done in deponent's presence previously by other experiments, Madame Blavatsky, without preparation, and in full light, and in the presence and sight of deponent, Col. Olcott, and Dr. L. M. Marquette, tore a sheet of common writing paper in two, and asked us the subject we would have represented. Deponent named the portrait of a certain very holy man in India. Thereupon laying the paper upon the table

evening tumbled down through the air before our very eyes, as H. P. B., Damodar and I were conversing in my office at Bombay with (if I remember aright) the Dewan Sankariah of Cochin.

Madame Blavatsky placed the palm of her hand upon it, and after rubbing the paper a few times (occupying less than a minute) with a circular motion, lifted her hand and gave deponent the paper for inspection. Upon the previously white surface there was a most remarkable and striking picture of an Indian Fakir, representing him as if in contemplation. Deponent has frequently seen it since, and it is now in possession of Col. Olcott. Deponent positively avers that the blank paper first taken was the paper on which the picture appeared, and that no substitution of another paper was made or was possible.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 20th day of March 1878.

SAMUEL V. SPEYER, *Notary Public, New York County.*

STATE OF NEW YORK.
CITY AND COUNTY OF NEW YORK, } SS.

I, Henry A. Gumbleton, Clerk of the City and County of New York, and also Clerk of the Supreme Court for the said City and County, being a Court of Record, do hereby certify that Samuel V. Speyer, before whom the annexed deposition was taken, was at the time of taking the same a Notary Public of New York, dwelling in said City and County, duly appointed and sworn and authorized to administer oaths to be used in any Court in said State, and for general purposes; and that his signature thereto is genuine, as I verily believe.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand, and affixed the seal of the said Court and County the 20th day of March 1878.

HENRY A. GUMBLETON, *Clerk.*

The undersigned, a practising physician, residing at No. 224, Spring Street, in the City of New York, having read the foregoing affidavit of Mr. Judge, certifies that it is a correct statement of the facts. The portrait was produced, as described, in full light, and without there being any opportunity for fraud. Moreover, the undersigned wishes to say that other examples of Madame Blavatsky's power to instantly render objective the images in her mind, have been given in the presence of many witnesses, including the undersigned; and that, having intimately known that lady since 1873, when she was living with her brother at Paris, the undersigned can and does unreservedly testify that her moral character is above censure, and that her phenomena have been invariably produced in defiance of the conditions of mediumship, with which the undersigned is very familiar.

L. M. MARQUETTE, M.D.

So much for the circumstances attending the production of the portrait; now let us see what are its artistic merits. The witnesses

You and I will never see Jesus in the flesh, but if you should ever meet ———, or one or two others whom I might mention, I think you will say that they are near enough our ideal "to satisfy one's longing for the tree of humanity to put forth such a flower."

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are well qualified, Mr. O'Donovan being one of the best known of American sculptors, and, as alleged, an experienced art critic, and Mr. LeClear occupying a place second to none as a portrait painter:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPIRITUALIST."

SIR,—For the benefit of those among your readers who may be able to gather the significance of it, I beg to offer some testimony concerning a remarkable performance claimed by Col. Olcott and Madame Blavatsky to have been done by herself without the aid of such physical means as are employed by persons usually for such an end. The production referred to is a small portrait in black and white of a Hindu Fakir, which was produced by Madame Blavatsky, as it is claimed, by a simple exercise of will power. As to the means by which this work was produced, however, I have nothing at all to do, and wish simply to say as an artist, and give also the testimony of Mr. Thomas LeClear, one of the most eminent of our portrait painters, whose experience as such has extended over fifty years—that the work is of a kind that could not have been done by any living artist known to either of us. It has all the essential qualities which distinguish the portraits by Titian, Masàccio, and Raphael, namely, individuality of the profoundest kind, and consequently breadth and unity of as perfect a quality as I can conceive. I may safely assert that there is no artist who has given intelligent attention to portraiture, who would not concur with Mr. LeClear and myself in the opinion which we have formed of this remarkable work; and if it was done, as it is claimed to have been done, I am at utter loss to account for it. I may add that this drawing, or whatever it may be termed, has a first sight the appearance of having been done by washes of Indian ink, but that upon closer inspection, both Mr. LeClear and myself have been unable to liken it to any process of drawing known to us; the black tints seem to be an integral part of the paper upon which it is done. I have seen numbers of drawings claimed to have been done by spirit influences, in which the vehicle employed was perfectly obvious, and none of them were of more than mediocre artistic merit; not one of them, certainly, could be compared at all with this most remarkable performance of which I write.

WM. R. O'DONOVAN.

STUDIO BUILDING, 51, WEST 10TH STREET,
NEW YORK.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

DEAR SIR,—My experience has not made me at all familiar with magic, but I have seen much of what is termed spiritualistic phenomena. Among the latter so-called spirit drawings, which were

I am ordered to say that you may use this letter as your judgment may dictate after noting carefully its contents. With sincere regards and best wishes,

Yours,
H. S. Olcott.

No. 4.—(Extract of a letter from Mme. Blavatsky.)

"Mr.———— lays great stress upon his own so-called mediumship, and so might I have done whilst I was similarly affected. He says that the fact of different handwritings being produced through *his own* automatic writing, is a proof of disembodied spirits. Surely very poor logic that. Then there is that venerable party who died 100 years ago, who always writes in the same handwriting, and always gives the same name!

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thought by the mediums and their friends very fine, but the best of which I found wanting in every element of art.

I do not wish to be censorious, but an experience of fifty years in portrait-painting has perhaps made me exacting, when it is a question of paintings alleged to come from a supernatural source. This much by way of preface to the subject of my present note.

I have seen in your possession a portrait in black and white of an Indian religious ascetic, which is entirely unique. It would require an artist of very extraordinary power to reach the degree of ability which is expressed in this work. There is a oneness of treatment difficult to attain, with a pronounced individuality, combined with great breadth. As a whole, it is an *individual*. It has the appearance of having been done on the moment—a result inseparable from great art. I cannot discover with what material it is laid on the paper. I first thought it chalk, then pencil, then Indian ink; but a minute inspection leaves me quite unable to decide. Certainly it is neither of the above.

If, as you tell me, it was done instantaneously by Madame Blavatsky, then all I can say is, she must possess artistic powers not to be accounted for on any hypothesis except that of magic. The tint seems not to be laid on the surface of the common writing paper upon which the portrait is made, but to be combined, as it were, with the fibres themselves. No human being, however much genius he might have, could produce the work, except with much time and painstaking labour; and, if my observation goes for anything, no medium has ever produced anything worthy of being mentioned beside it.

Thos. LeClear.

Studio Building, 31, West 10th Street,
New York.

For over six years, from the time I was eight or nine years old until I grew up to the age of fifteen, I had an old spirit (Mrs. T......... L......... she called herself), who came every night to write through me, in the presence of my father, aunts and many other people, residents of Tiflis and Saratoff. She gave a detailed account of her life, stated where she was born (at Revel, Baltic Provinces), how she married, and gave the history of all her children, including a long and thrilling romance about her eldest daughter, Z........., and the suicide of her son F........., who also came at times and indulged in long rhapsodies about his sufferings as a suicide.

The old lady mentioned that she saw God and the Virgin Mary, and a host of angels, two of which bodiless creatures she introduced to our family, to the great joy of the latter, and who promised (all this through my handwritings) that they would watch over me, &c., &c., *tout comme il faut.*

She even described her own death, and gave the name and address of the Lutheran pastor who administered to her the last sacrament.

She gave a detailed account of a petition she had presented to the Emperor Nicholas, and wrote it out *verbatim* in her own handwriting through my child's hand.

Well, this lasted, as I said, nearly six years—my writings—in her clear old-fashioned, peculiar handwriting and grammar, in German (a language I had never learnt to write and could not even speak well) and in Russian—accumulating in these six years to a heap of MSS that would have filled ten volumes.

In those days this was not called spiritualism, but *possession.* But as our family priest was interested in the phenomena, he usually came and sat during our evening seance with holy water near

him, and a *goupillon* (how do you call it in English?) and so we were all safe.

Meanwhile one of my uncles had gone to Revel, and had there ascertained that there had really been such an old lady, the rich Mrs. T......... L........., who, in consequence of her son's dissolute life, had been ruined and had gone away to some relations in Norway, where she had died. My uncle also heard that her son was said to have committed suicide at a small village on the Norway coast (all correct as given by "the Spirit").

In short all that could be verified, every detail and circumstance, was verified, and found to be in accordance with my, or rather "the Spirit's," account; her age, number and name of children, chronological details, in fact everything stated.

When my uncle returned to St. Petersburg he desired to ascertain, as the last and crucial test, whether a petition, such as I had written, had ever been sent to the Emperor. Owing to his friendship with influential people in the Ministere de l'Interieur, he obtained access to the Archives, and there, as he had the correct date and year of the petition, and even the number under which it had been filed, he soon found it, and comparing it with my version sent up to him by my aunt, he found the two to be *fac-similes*, even to a remark in pencil written by the late Emperor on the margin, which I had reproduced as exactly as any engraver or photographer could have done.

Well, was it the genuine spirit of Mrs. L......... who had guided my medium hand? Was it really the spirit of her son F...... who had produced through me in *his* handwriting all those posthumous lamentations and wailings and gushing expressions of repentance?

Of course, any spiritualist would feel certain of

the fact. What better identification, or proof of spirit identity; what better demonstration of the survival of man after death, and of his power to revisit earth and communicate with the living, could be hoped for or even conceived?

But it was nothing of the kind, and this experience of my own, which hundreds of persons in Russia can affirm—all my own relations to begin with—constitutes, as you will see, a most perfect answer to the spiritualists.

About one year after my uncle's visit to St. Petersburg, and when the excitement following this perfect verification had barely subsided, D........., an officer who had served in my father's regiment, came to Tiflis. He had known me as a child of hardly five years old, had played constantly with me, had shown me his family portraits, had allowed me to ransack his drawers, scatter his letters, &c., and, amongst other things, had often shown me a miniature upon ivory of an old lady in cap and white curls and green shawl, saying it was his old aunty, and teazing me, when I said she was old and ugly, by declaring that one day I should be just as old and ugly.

To go through the whole story would be tedious; to make matters short, let me say at once that D......... was Mrs. L.........'s nephew—her sister's son.

Well, he came to see us often (I was 14 then), and one day asked for us children to be allowed to visit him in the camp. We went with our Governess, and when there I saw upon his writing-table the old miniature of his aunt, *my spirit!* I had quite forgotten that I had ever seen it in my childhood. I only recognized her as the spirit who for nearly six years had almost nightly visited me and written through me, and I almost fainted. "It is, it is the spirit," I screamed; "it is Mrs. T...... L........."

"Of course, it is, my old aunt; but you don't mean to say that you have remembered all about your old play thing all these years?" said D......... who knew nothing about my spirit-writing. "I mean to say I see and have seen your dead aunt, if she is your aunt, every night for years; she comes to write through me." "Dead?" he laughed, "but she is *not* dead. I have only just received a letter from her from Norway," and he then proceeded to give full details as to where she was living and all about her.

That same day D......... was let into the secret by my aunts, and told of all that had transpired through my mediumship. Never was a man more astounded than was D........., and never were people more taken aback than were my venerable aunts, spiritualists, *sans le savoir*.

It then came out that not only was his aunt not dead, but that her son F......, the repentant suicide, *l'esprit soufrant*, had only attempted suicide, had been cured of his wound, and was at the time, (and may be to this day), employed in a counting house in Berlin.

Well then, who or what was "the intelligence" writing through my hand, giving such accurate details, dictating correctly every word of her petition, &c., and yet romancing so readily about *her* death, *his* sufferings after death, &c., &c.? Clearly despite the full proofs of identity, *not* the spirits of the worthy Mrs. T...... L........., or her scapegrace son F......, since both these were still in the land of the living. "The evil one," said my pious aunts; "the Devil of course," bluntly said the Priest. Elementaries, some would suppose, but according to what —— * has told me, it was all the work of my own mind. I was a delicate child. I had hereditary tendencies to extra-normal exercise of mental faculties, though, of course, perfectly unconscious

* One of the Brothers.

then of anything of the kind. Whilst I was playing with the miniature, the old lady's letters and other things, my fifth principle (call it animal soul, physical intelligence, mind, or what you will,) was reading and seeing all about them in the astral light, just as does the mind of a clairvoyant when in sleep; what it so saw and read was faithfully recorded in my dormant memory, although, a mere babe as I was, I had no consciousness of this.

Years after, some chance circumstance, some trifling association of ideas, again put my mind in connection with these long forgotten, or rather I should say never hitherto consciously recognized pictures, and it began one day to reproduce them. Little by little the mind, following these pictures into the astral light, was dragged as it were into the current of Mrs. L.........'s personal and individual associations and emanations, and then the mediumistic impulse given, there was nothing to arrest it, and I became a medium, not for the transmission of messages from the dead, not for the amusement of elementaries, but for the objective reproduction of what my own mind read and saw in the astral light.

It will be remembered that I was weak and sickly, and that I inherited capacities for such abnormal exercise of mind—capacities which subsequent training might develop, but which at that age would have been of no avail, had not feebleness of physique, a looseness of attachment, if I may so phrase it, between the matter and spirit, of which we are all composed, abnormally, for the time, developed them. As it was, as I grew up, and gained health and strength, my mind became as closely prisoned in my physical frame as that of any other person, and all these phenomena ceased.

How, while so accurate as to so many points, my mind should have led me into killing both mother

and son, and producing such orthodox lamentations by the latter over his wicked act of self-destruction, may be more difficult to explain.

But from the first all around me were impressed with the belief that the spirit possessing me must be that of a dead person, and from this probably my mind took the impression. Who the Lutheran Pastor was who had performed the last sad rite, I never knew—probably some name I had heard, or seen in some book, in connection with some death-bed scene, picked out of memory by the mind to fill a gap, in what it knew.

Of the sons' attempt at suicide I must have heard in some of the mentally read letters, or have come across it or mention of it in the astral light, and must have concluded that death had followed, and since, young though I was, I knew well how sinful suicide was deemed, it is not difficult to understand how the mind worked out the apparently inevitable corollary. Of course, in a devout house like ours, God, the Virgin Mary and Angels were sure to play a part, as these had been ground into my mind from my cradle.

Of all this perception and deception, however, I was utterly unconscious. The fifth principle worked as it listed ; my sixth principle or spiritual soul or consciousness was still dormant, and therefore for me the seventh principle at that time may be said not to have existed.

But I am straying from my purpose, which simply was to show that the most perfect proofs of spirit identity, I mean apparent proofs, are utterly fallacious, and that spiritualists, who base their theories on these supposed proofs, are truly building their house upon the sand.

Memo. by the President of the Theosophical Society.

In some of the foregoing letters, one aspect of the discussion, which has for long been going on between believers and disbelievers in the genuineness of our mission, is, I think, fairly enough set forth.

I could, indeed, have wished that the sceptical side of the argument had been somewhat more strongly urged ; but our defenders are more logical than our assailants, and I have as yet seen no attack as reasonable or comprehensive as that with which this pamphlet opens.

Of course, I have seen plenty of forcible (though ludicrous) attacks by persons who disbelieve altogether even in the phenomena of spiritualism; but such persons belong to one of two classes; they are either persons who have never investigated the subject, and are consequently incapable of forming any useful opinion on it, or they are persons not possessing the requisite intellectual capacity for forming a correct independent opinion on any but the simplest questions. It is too late in the day now to argue with either of these classes. We are sorry for them, but it is no part of our present programme to attempt to convince these. There is a mass of literature published in Europe and America in the language of every civilized nation, (to say nothing of the admirable "Psychic Notes" now issuing in Calcutta) more than sufficient to satisfy any intelligent human being, who will only take the trouble to examine it, of the reality of the phenomena of spiritualism, and to these sources of knowledge, to this remedy for their present deplorable ignorance, we must content ourselves with directing *such* persons.

But there is another class, far too well able to weigh evidence, and far too intelligent to disbelieve the phenomena of spiritualism ; and it is in hopes of helping to lead some of *these* to higher truths that

we have decided on publishing, as they stand, and all imperfect as they are, the foregoing papers.

This class believes in spiritualism in some of its many aspects, but disbelieves in occultism—disbelieves in the mission of the founders of the Theosophical Society; and when these latter simply and honestly state that the many phenomena and phenomenal occurrences that have taken place in connection with them and their work are due to the intervention of enlightened living men and not of disembodied spirits, they calmly set these founders down as, to use the least offensive phrase, "fabricators of fiction."

No doubt, considering all we have given up, all we have done, and how we have lived, it is hard to be slandered, as we two have been for the last seven years, even by the ignorant mass of total disbelievers ; but it is still harder to find ourselves, distrusted and continuously suspected or accused of fraud or falsehood by the more intelligent section of the community that *has* mastered and assimilated the facts of spiritualism.

It is hard, I say; but still I can see that it was all in the contract ; no one could take up such a work as ours and escape suspicion and calumny, and so we are bound cheerfully to make the best of it.

Fortunately to me this is not difficult. If I am honest and true, and do my work well, increase by ever so little the sum of human knowledge and happiness, and decrease by ever so little the total of human ignorance and misery, it matters little, what, under one or other misapprehension, the good folks around are pleased to say and think of me. I would fain have their help, their good words and kindly thoughts; the esteem of those around us is sweet to all, but I *must* do the work appointed to me, I *must* tell the truths I am commissioned to spread; and if by so doing I needs must lose those kindly

words and thoughts, even let them go. This life is but a short stage in the long journey, and we shall soon have done with it.

Unfortunately my valued friend and colleague, Madame Blavatsky, is less happily constituted and suffers acutely from all this calumny ; and I almost regret that she should have ever entered the arena with me to combat ignorance, prejudice and bigotry. But no suffering in the cause of truth is ever vain or ever goes unrewarded, and she will assuredly find her recompense elsewhere.

I am very much obliged to Mr. X. for his elaborate defence of Theosophy. He has answered fairly well most of his opponent's contentions, but there is one referred to on page 74, *viz.*, the inconclusiveness of appearances at our head-quarters, in regard to which I may perhaps usefully add a few words.

I do not understand our sceptic to mean, that at our head-quarters we have mechanical appliances or magic lanterns, by aid of which we perform phenomena. This would be too absurd, because these have occurred, not only in all parts of our present two bungalows, and in the open air all round, but at the Khandalla station of the Ghats, where we were only stopping for a day; at Simla, Benares, Ceylon, &c, where we were living in other people's houses—to say nothing of Europe and America ; and we certainly could not drag our machinery and apparatus about with us. I suppose him rather, being a spiritualist, to mean that, residing long at the head-quarters, we have impregnated the place with the subtle fluid that favours phenomena, and that he should look upon any phenomenal appearances there as merely mediumistic displays. Now, though no medium, so far as I know, has ever, by any length of residence at any place, succeeded in producing phenomena of the same kind, still his idea is not so very far from the truth.

Phenomena do occur far more readily at our head-quarters than anywhere else, and it is because the place has been impregnated, though not by us, with a subtle fluid.

A man who saw one of the Brothers at the head-quarters, but failed to see one elsewhere, might as well deny their existence, as deny the telephone after getting a message in the office, because he failed to obtain one at a place to which no wires were laid down.

The Brothers mainly appear where we are, simply because *there* they have the necessary conditions. Our houses, wherever we make a head-quarters, are certainly prepared, not with machinery, but with a special magnetism. The first thing the Brothers do when we take up a new residence is to prepare it thus, and we never take a new house without their approval; they examine all we think of taking, and pick out the one most favourable. Sometimes they send every one of us out of the house if they desire to specially magnetize the place.

It is absurd to suppose that they can do everything they please, at any time, just where they like. If they *could*, then they would be able to work *miracles*. But there neither are, never were, and never will be, any real miracles, although what they do may *seem* miraculous to those less cognizant of natural laws than are the adepts. No, they are just as much tied by natural laws as any one else; they are conditioned by all the forces of the universe, and it is only when certain conditions exist spontaneously, or have been brought about by them, that they can perform phenomena, and very often existing conditions are such that they cannot possibly replace them on the spur of the moment by favourable ones.

If any one then is offended at these phenomena taking place, chiefly at head-quarters, let him

bear in mind that my simile of the telephone is really a very fair one.

As to the phenomena that have recently occurred there I may, perhaps, out of a mass of evidence that I could collect if necessary, append in continuation of those already given by our defender, a few written statements that are available at the moment.

H. S. OLCOTT.

Statement of the Hon'ble J. Smith, Member of the Legislative Council, N. S. W., Professor in Sydney University, President of the Royal Society, N. S. W., &c., &c. *

DEAR COLONEL OLCOTT,—While the following facts are fresh in my memory I place them on record for your use.

On the evening of 31st January, when the daily batch of letters were being opened, one was found to contain some red writing different from the body of the letter. Col. Olcott then took two unopened letters and asked Madame Blavatsky if she could perceive similar writing in them. Putting them to her forehead she said one contained the word "carelessly" and the other something about Col. Olcott and a branch at Cawnpore. I then examined these letters and found the envelopes sound. I opened them and saw the words mentioned. One letter was from Meerut, one from Cawnpore, and one from Hyderabad. Next day at tiffin Col. Olcott remarked that if I were to get any letters while here there might be some of the same writing in them. I replied that there would be "*no chance* of that, as no one

* The Hon'ble Professor Smith, on his way home from Australia, was stopping for a few days at our head-quarters.—H. S. O.

would write to me." Madame Blavatsky then looking fixedly for a little, said, "I see a Brother here." He asks if you would like some such token as that we have been speaking of" [I cannot give the exact words]. I replied that I would be much gratified. She rose from the table and told us to follow her. Taking my hand, she led me along the verandah, stopping and looking about at some points till we reached the door of my bed-room. She then desired me to enter alone and look round the room to see if there was anything unusual, and to close the other doors. I did so, and was satisfied the room was in its usual condition. She then desired us to sit down, and in doing so took my hands in both of hers. In a few seconds a letter fell at my feet. It seemed to me to appear first a little above the level of my head. On opening the envelope I found a sheet of note paper headed with a Government stamp of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, and the following words written with red pencil, *in exactly the same handwriting as that in the letters of the previous evening:* "NO CHANCE of writing to you inside your letters, but I can write *direct.* Work for us in Australia, and we will not prove ungrateful, but will prove to you our actual existence, and thank you." A fair review of the circumstances excludes, in my opinion, any theory of fraud.

BOMBAY, *2nd February* 1882.

(Sd.) J. SMITH.

Statement of a Canarese Brahmin.

Many sceptics having rashly and ignorantly denied the existence of the so-called "Himalayan Brothers," I am provoked by a sense of duty to declare solemnly that such assertions are false. For, I have seen the Brothers not once, but numerous times in and near the head-quarters in bright moonlight. I have heard them talk to our respected Madame Blavatsky, and seen them delivering important messages in connection with the work of the Theosophical Society,

whose progress they have condescended to watch. They are not disembodied spirits, as the Spiritualists would force us to believe, but living men. I was on seeing them neither hallucinated nor entranced ; for there are other deserving fellows of our Society who had the honour to see them with me, and who could verify my statements. And this, once for all, is the answer that I, as a *Theosophist* and *Hindu Brahmin*, give to disbelievers, *viz.*, that these Brothers are not mere fictions of our respectable Madame Blavatsky's imagination, but real personages, whose existence to us is not a matter of mere belief, but of actual knowledge.

BHAVANISHANKAR GANESH MULLAPOORCAR, F. T. S.

Joint Statement of a reigning Indian Prince and other reputable witnesses.

At a little before 6 P.M., on the evening of the 10th instant, the following phenomenon occurred in our presence. Colonel Olcott was showing some of us the exact spot upon which, on the evening of the 29th January, a Brother had stood, with the moonlight shining upon his face, and returned his salute. It was in the garden of the upper terrace at the Theosophical Head-Quarters, and at a distance from the porch of 17 paces—as has since been ascertained by measurement. We were facing the bungalow. Madame Blavatsky sat in her chair in the porch; near her sat Mr. Bharucha, and Mr. Bhavani Rau stood leaning against the left hand pillar. Mr. Damodar was crossing from the porch to where we stood, Madame Blavatsky having asked him to go to us. Just at the moment when he had reached our group, Madame Blavatsky called to him again, and all of us, except Rawal Shree Hari Singhjee, looked at him, thinking that some phenomenon might happen near his person. At that instant a white packet, tied with a bit of green thread, fell from the air upon the garden path. The spot was, as measured, ten paces from

Madame Blavatsky's chair and seven from our group. Hari Singhjee and the two gentlemen in the porch—Messrs Bharucha and Bhavani Rau—saw it descending through the air vertically. Others heard the noise when it struck the ground. The Thakore Saheb picked it up. It was addressed to him. Inside was a note merely asking him to hand over to Colonel Olcott for mailing an enclosed sealed letter addressed to Mr. Sinnett, of Allahabad. The handwriting and cypher signature were those of the Brother who is known as Col. Olcott's *Guru.* Whatever foolish theory any sceptic may hitherto have propounded about the various letters which from time to time have dropped from the air to various persons *in the verandahs and rooms* of the head-quarters buildings, is by the latest phenomenon completely refuted. For, in this instance, the letter fell vertically from the open air in a garden, while it was light enough for us to see the slightest attempt at trickery, and where—the flower garden being on a high terrace—there was no hiding place for confederates. Madame Blavatsky did not stir from her chair while the note was falling, and Col. Olcott's back was turned, so that he did not see the phenomenon at all.

BOMBAY, *12th February* 1882.

I saw the letter falling *vertically.*

RAWAL SHREE HARI SINGHJI RUPSINGJI of Sehore,
Cousin to H. H. The Thakore of Bhownugger.

I also saw the letter falling perpendicularly through the air. It fell, or rather struck, the ground with a noise. I was sitting near Madame Blavatsky at that time.

DORABJI HORMUSJI BHARUCHA.

While I stood leaning against the left hand pillar near Madame Blavatsky, I saw the letter falling perpendicularly through the air.

BHAVANISHANKAR GANESH MULLAPOORCAR.

I was present on the occasion, but was engaged in another direction when the letter in question fell, although I can certify to the correctness of the other circumstances.

K. M. SHROFF.

I saw the packet fallen, when picked up by one of the group after being told to search for it. The packet was opened, and the contents therein read inside the house by Thakore Saheb with the help of a lamp, as it was then growing dark.

KRISHNA SHASTRI GODBOLE.

I opened the letter and found the one inside as described.

DAJI RAJ THAKORE SAHIB OF WUDHWAN.
DAMODAR K. MAVALANKAR.

Statement of Mr. Kavasji Mervanji Shroff, a Parsi Gentleman, and others.

On Tuesday, the 7th February 1882, at about 6 P.M., I was at the head-quarters, Breach Candy, of the Theosophical Society. The party consisted of Madame Blavatsky, Colonel Olcott, His Highness the Rajah of Wudhwan, his Minister Mr. Ganpatrow N. Land, Rawal Shree Hari Singhjee of Sehore, Mr. Dorabjee, H. Bharucha, a fourth-year medical student, and the Secretary Mr. Damodar K. Mavalankar, and myself.

We sat in the open porch of the upper bungalow, looking out upon the ocean. The conversation related to the sad ignorance of the Aryan philosophies which prevailed among the people of India. Various remarks were exchanged, and Madame Blavatsky was speaking with some feeling about the past treatment the Founders of the Society had suffered at the

hands of many who ought to have been warm friends. Suddenly she stopped, looked fixedly out into the compound, rose to her feet and then reseated herself. She said one of the Brothers was there listening, but we could see no one except ourselves. Presently, to the great surprise and astonishment of those present, a note, darting across the open space around, came in a slanting direction and dropped on the table that stood by the Dewan Saheb. It was addressed to "all whom it may concern," and its contents referred to the subject of our conversation. Then she informed me that she had received a letter from a gentleman of Lahore. She wished me to read that letter. A search was made for that letter which could not be found in her papers. She then assured us that she still felt something more would occur. She then wished us to go to the guest-chamber inside the bungalow, but before the whole party entered, she asked the Rajah and myself to first go into the room with a lamp—it was now dusk—and to examine the place thoroughly. We did so, and were satisfied that no one from outside could possibly have any communication. The wooden ceiling of the room was perfectly intact. The windows and doors were closely fastened. After our careful examination was over, and we had satisfied ourselves that everything was right, she directed the whole party to enter the room, and the only remaining open door was also shut. The party stood around a table on which I had placed the lamp. She then asked us to form a ring, each held the hand of one standing by him, so not one of the party had his hands free. We stood still in that posture for perhaps a minute, when, to our great amazement, there dropped a letter addressed in my care to the active members of the Theosophical Society. The envelope contained the missing Lahore letter above referred to, and a separate note of a full page written in a red crayon in a large bold hand, and also quoting expressions that had just fallen from us in the porch outside. The letter descended from above us fluttering in the air and dropped at the foot of one of our party. We all agreed that even if it

had been desired there could by no possibility have been any trick of hand in this case.

K. M. SHROFF.

We certify to the correctness of the above statement.

DAJI RAJ THAKORE SAHIB OF WUDHWAN;
RAWAL SHREE HARI SINGHJI RUPSINGJI,
of Sehore,
Cousin to H. H. The Thakore of Bhownugger,
GUNPUTROW N. LAND,
Karbhari of Wudhwan.
DORABJI HORMUSJI BHARUCHA,
Student, Grant Medical College.
DAMODAR K. MAVALANKAR,

Statement of Martandrao Babaji Nagnath, a Brahmin.

As a member of the Parent Theosophical Society, I have had constant occasions to visit its head-quarters at Breach Candy, Bombay. My connection with the Founders of the Society has been close, and my opportunity good for studying Theosophy. I am therefore inclined, for my satisfaction and for the information of students of Nature, to record here my experiences of certain phenomena, which came under my observation on several occasions in the presence of brother theosophists and strangers. I have also had the rare privilege to see the so-called and generally unseen Brothers of the 1st section of the Theosophical Society.

On one night in the year 1879, I, in company with Brother Theosophists and some strangers, was enjoying conversation with the Founders of the Society. At about midnight, when we were leaving the premises and were in the open compound, Madame Blavatsky

on a sudden held me back with one of her hands on my shoulder, near a tree in the compound, and to our great surprise, a sound of sweet music was heard coming from the tree.

In the month of September 1880, when Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott were about to leave for Simla, we found one evening the Naib Dewan of Cochin States, Mr. Shunkeraya, talking with them at their head-quarters in Girgaum. In the course of conversation he happened to ask for a card bearing Madame's name and address. Madame then gave him a visiting card which she had with her, but the Karbhari asked for one more, upon which Madame said "there it is coming," and so a card came down from above, fluttering through the air like a bit of down, and fell to the ground. Neither Madame nor any one else had stirred from their place.

In the month of April 1881, on one dark night, while talking in company with other Theosophists with Madame Blavatsky about 10 P. M. in the open verandah of the upper bungalow, a man, six feet in height, clad in a white robe, with a white *roomal* or *phetta* on the head, made his appearance on a sudden, walking towards us through the garden adjacent to the bungalow from a point—a precipice—where there is no path for any one to tread. Madame then rose up and told us to go inside the bungalow. So we went in, but we heard Madame and he talking for a minute with each other in an Eastern language unknown to us. Immediately after, we again went out into the verandah, as we were called, but the Brother had disappeared.

On the next occasion, when we were chatting in the above verandah as usual, another Brother, clothed in a white dress, was suddenly seen as if standing on a branch of a tree. We saw him then descending as though through the air, and standing on a corner edge of a thin wall. Madame then rose up from her seat and stood looking at him for about two minutes,

and as if it seemed—talking inaudibly with him. Immediately after, in our presence, the figure of the man disappeared, but was afterwards seen again walking in the air through space, then right through the tree, and again disappearing.

Similarly, in a strong moonlight on another night, I, in company with three Brother Theosophists, was conversing with Madame Blavatsky. Madame Coulomb was also present. About eight or ten yards distant from the open verandah in which we were sitting, we saw a Brother known to us as Koot Hoomi Lal Sing. He was wearing a white loose gown or robe, with long wavy hair and a beard; and was gradually forming, as it were, in front of a shrub or number of shrubs some twenty or thirty yards away from us, until he stood to a full height. Madame Coulomb was asked in our presence by Madame Blavatsky: "Is this good Brother a devil?" as she used to think and say so when seeing the Brothers, and was afraid. She then answered: "No; this one is a man." He then showed his full figure for about two or three minutes, then gradually disappeared, melting away into the shrub. On the same night again, at about 11 P.M., we, about seven or eight in number, were hearing a letter read to us, addressed to the *London Spiritualist* about our having seen Brothers, which one of our number had drafted, and which we were ready to sign. At this instant Mr. and Madame Coulomb called out and said: "Here is again our Brother." This Brother (Koot Hoomi Lal Sing again) was sometimes standing and walking in the garden here and there, at other times floating in the air. He soon passed into and was heard in Madame Blavatsky's room talking with her. On this account after we had signed the letter to the *London Spiritualist* we added a postscript that we had just seen him again while signing the letter. Koot Hoomi was in his *Mayavi rupa** on that evening.

* A Sanskrit word for what is called by Western people the "double," "Doppelganger," "Corps fluidique, or perisprit," &c. It means a form will-created, or desire-created.—H.S.O.

On another night a Brother came in his own physical body, walking through the lower garden (attached to Colonel Olcott's bungalow) and stood quiet. Madame Blavatsky then went down the wooden staircase leading into the garden. He shook hands with her and gave her a packet. After a short time the Brother *disappeared on the spot*, and Madame coming up the stairs opened the packet and found in it a letter from Allahabad. We saw the envelope was quite blank, *i.e.*, unaddressed, but it bore a triangular stamp of Allahabad Post Office of December the 3rd, 1881, and also a circular postal stamp of the Bombay Post Office of *the same date*, *viz.*, 3rd December. The two cities are 860 miles apart.

I have seen letters, or rather envelopes containing letters, coming or falling from the air in different places, without anybody's contact, in presence of both Theosophists and strangers. Their contents related to subjects that had been the topics of our conversation at the moment.

Now I aver in good faith I saw the Brothers of the 1st section and phenomena in such places and times, and under such circumstances, that there could be no possibility of anybody's playing a trick.

MARTANDRAO BABAJI NAGNATH.

BOMBAY,
14th February 1882.

Statement of Bal Nilaji Pitale, a Brahmin.

I have much pleasure in giving my humble testimony to certain phenomena produced by Madame Blavatsky, and which have come under my observation since I became a Theosophist. Although not a daily visitor to their place of residence, yet I often go to her and Colonel Olcott, as I always find their conversation most agreeable and instructive. One

night, when they lived at Girgaum, I went to them; there were half a dozen visitors besides myself sitting in the verandah in the rear of her bungalow. Suddenly I heard twice jingling sounds of music—similar to those given out by a music-box. I was the first to remark them. One or two of the company said they heard them also. Just when the company was breaking up Madame Blavatsky came out of the verandah into the open air and stood still, and while steadily gazing towards the sky, we heard music similar to the tunes of a music-box. She then approached a tree, and laying her hand upon it, we heard music as if within the tree. A second time I observed a different phenomenon. It was also at Girgaum, and at night, in Colonel Olcott's room. On this occasion the Naib Dewan of Cochin was present. A very interesting conversation was going on about the material advancement of the people, spiritual science, &c. During the conversation the Dewan asked for Madame Blavatsky's card. She said that she had only one by her then, but he asked for another—one brought to him in a phenomenal way. In the meantime something fluttered on the wall about two feet from the ceiling—which was about fifteen feet high—and an oblong piece of paper was seen to drop on Colonel Olcott's table. It turned out to be a fac-simile of the card given to the Dewan. The third time I saw a phenomenon was at the Crow's Nest Bungalow at Breach Candy. One of the members of the Society had brought with him a medium. He is one of the graduates in medicine of the local University. He has been lately practising mesmerism, and wished to show Madame Blavatsky how far he had advanced in his studies. While the experiments were going on Madame Blavatsky asked the operator to ask his subject, who was in a partially clairvoyant condition, when she would receive a letter from Ceylon that she expected. The answer given was that she would not receive it when expected. She then asked the company, numbering about 17 persons, to stand up and form a circle, clasping each other's hands. This was done immediately. But lo!

in the twinkling of an eye a piece of paper fluttered in the air, visible about three feet from the ceiling, and then slantingly dropped on the floor. The paper turned out to be a letter from Ceylon enclosed in an envelope addressed to her in red ink. The reason why the persons were asked to form themselves into a circle and clasp each other's hands was that nobody should afterwards insinuate that it was thrown by any one composing the group. The impression that is left on my mind after beholding these phenomena is that they were *bonâ fide* scientific experiments. To honest inquirers it is plain that an unknown force exists, a subjective one, which is not universally known.

BAL NILAJI PITALE.

BOMBAY,

14th February 1882.

POSTSCRIPT TO SECOND EDITION.

SINCE the first edition of this Pamphlet was published, a considerable number of that class of our opponents whom my friend G. Y. fairly represents, have come round to concede the probability of the existence of the Brothers, and some, indeed, have become as firmly convinced of this as any of ourselves. They still maintain that there have been many acts and omissions on the parts of both the nominal and real founders of the Society, quite inexplicable to *them*, and furnishing reasonable grounds for the doubt and disbelief of the outside public, but they themselves no longer disbelieve.

It is not, however, anything in this pamphlet which has effected this revolution in their opinions, but a series of occurrences, of which, seeing the effect they have had on many minds, it seems to me desirable to include a narrative in this second edition. To me personally there is nothing in this particular matter

at all *more* convincing than many other phenomena recorded in "The Occult World" or already alluded to in this pamphlet; but to many minds it would seem that this has brought conviction, where everything else has failed to do so.

Everybody, at all interested in these questions is aware that during this last cold season, Mr. W. Eglinton, a highly developed medium, visited Calcutta. Mr. Eglinton, as every one will testify who had anything to do with him, is in every sense of the word a gentleman—rather sensitive and touchy no doubt, and rather too much impressed perhaps with a sense of the importance of his gift, but in all essentials as good a young fellow, I believe as is to be met with.

Naturally, in Calcutta, Mr. Eglinton heard from Col. and Mrs. Gordon, with whom he was staying during a portion of his visit, and from other sources, a great deal about Madame Blavatsky* and the BROTHERS. Against these latter he altogether set his face; he himself wrote to me distinctly that he did not believe in them, and that in his opinion Madame Blavatsky was simply a medium, and that the phenomena that had occurred in connection with her were solely due to the agency of spirits.

It was suggested to the Brothers that they should get hold of and bring their influence to bear on the spirits or entities who worked with Eglinton, convince these of their (the Brothers') existence and powers, and through them open his (Eglinton's) eyes to the truth. We were told that this would be done.

I will now quote Mrs. Gordon's published narrative of what occurred. After explaining how she and

* Of course he had also heard *something* of her before he came to India. Indeed, though he had never seen her, and *she* never, I think, communicated with *him*, he had, previous to coming to India, once written to her asking her advice as to coming.—H. X.

her husband had come to know of, and believe in, the Brothers, she says that as regards these

"Mr. Eglinton was a sceptic, and took the same attitude towards this question as does the outside world towards Spiritualism; because *he* did not know them, therefore the 'Brothers' could not exist. I gave up arguing on the subject, seeing its uselessness. About a fortnight before Mr. E. left, and before he had decided on going, I received a letter from Madame Blavatsky telling me some of the reasons why Mr. E. had not yet been made acquainted with the existence of our 'Brothers;' but at the same time saying that his 'guides,' as they are called, had now been made to know the fact. I questioned Mr. Eglinton, but found he knew nothing, and a letter he wrote about this time to one of our 'fellows' proved him still a sceptic. Two or three evenings later we had a séance to ourselves, when, to my amusement, one of his 'guides' spoke about the 'Illustrious'—a pseudonym given by us to a certain 'Brother,' but quite unknown to Mr. Eglinton.

"Mr. E. was entranced while I was conversing in the direct voice with his 'guides,' and learning from them that some phenomena would be done by their agency, with the help of Madame Blavatsky after Mr. Eglinton's departure. They said the 'Brothers' had consented to this.

"When Mr. Eglinton returned to his normal state, we told him what we had heard, and I afterwards gave him Madame Blavatsky's letter to read. He was not at all elated at having a belief in the 'Brothers' forced on him, their alleged superiority to *mediums* being rather a sore point between us! However he had no alternative but to accept them, as a communication was given him by his chief 'guide' in direct writing to the same effect.

"Mr. Eglinton, about this time, in consequence of bad news from England, suddenly resolved to go

home for two or three months, and I suggested to him to try while at sea, and send me a letter through Madame Blavatsky, as his 'guides' had told me they were prepared to work in connection with her. He seemed very doubtful whether it could be done, as he had never met Madame Blavatsky, and in all cases of such phenomena hitherto, both of the actors had been mutually acquainted and in sympathy with each other. In this instance the situation was the reverse, as Madame Blavatsky has shown a distrust of all mediums excepting only one or two who were well known to her. Mr. Eglinton, on the other hand, was inclined to believe that Madame Blavatsky was only a medium who *pretended* to be something higher. There seemed to me just a possibility of reconciliation and mutual appreciation, when the eve of Mr. Eglinton's departure came. His baggage was already on board, and the steamer down the river, when a telegram came from Madame Blavatsky to me saying, that if he would stay a week longer she had orders to come down and meet him. This was impossible. The next morning, Wednesday the 15th of March (he having gone on board the evening before) a telegram came for him which I opened, saying the 'Illustrious' wished him while the President of the T. S. was at Howrah, to send letters in his handwriting from on board ship, and that he would be helped. I advised him, in case he should consent, to get some fellow-passenger to endorse the letter before sending it off to me. He wrote from Fisherman's Point on Wednesday at 4 o'clock, saying: 'Personally I am very doubtful whether these letters can be managed, but I will do what I can in the matter. I shall send you a letter from Suez if you don't receive one in the meantime by K. H.*'

"Colonel Olcott, the President of the Society, came from Berhampore on Sunday the 19th. He having left Bombay, February 17th, had heard nothing up till then of all this. We received letters from

* Koot Hoomi, one of the "Brothers,"—A. G.

Madame Blavatsky, dated Bombay the 19th, telling us that something was going to be done, and expressing the earnest hope that she would not be required to assist as she had had enough abuse about phenomena. Before this letter was brought by the post peon, Colonel Olcott had told me that he had had an intimation in the night from his *Chohan* (teacher) that K. H. had been to the *Vega* and had seen Eglinton. This was at about eight o'clock on Thursday morning the 23rd. A few hours later a telegram, dated at Bombay 22nd day, 21 hour 9 minutes, that is to say 9 minutes past 9 P.M., on Wednesday evening, came to me from Madame Blavatsky, to this effect: 'K. H. just gone to *Vega*.' This telegram came as a 'delayed' message, and was *posted* to me from Calcutta, which accounts for its not reaching me until midday on Thursday. It corroborated, as will be seen, the message of the previous night to Colonel Olcott. We then felt hopeful of getting the letter by occult means from Mr. Eglinton. A telegram later on Thursday asked us to fix a time for a sitting, so we named 9 o'clock Madras time, on Friday 24th. At this hour we three—Colonel Olcott, Colonel Gordon, and myself,—sat in the room which had been occupied by Mr. Eglinton. We had a good light, and sat with our chairs placed to form a triangle, of which the apex was to the north. In a few minutes Colonel Olcott saw outside the open window the two 'Brothers' whose names are best known to us, and told us so; he saw them pass to another window, the glass doors of which were closed. He saw one of them point his hand towards the air over my head, and I felt something at the same moment fall straight down from above on to my shoulder, and saw it fall at my feet in the direction *towards* the two gentlemen. I knew it would be the letter, but for the moment I was so anxious to see the 'Brothers' that I did not pick up what had fallen. Colonel Gordon and Colonel Olcott both saw and heard the letter fall. Colonel Olcott had turned his head from the window for a moment to see what the 'Brother' was pointing at, and so noticed the letter falling from a

point about two feet from the ceiling. When he looked again the two 'Brothers' had vanished.

"There is no verandah outside, and the window is several feet from the ground.

"I now turned and picked up what had fallen on me, and found a letter in Mr. Eglinton's handwriting dated on the *Vega* the 24th; a message from Madame Blavatsky, dated at Bombay the 24th, written on the backs of three of her visiting cards; also a larger card such as Mr. Eglinton had a packet of, and used at his *séances*. On this latter card was the, to us, well-known handwriting of K. H., and a few words in the handwriting of the other 'Brother,' who was with him outside our windows, and who is Colonel Olcott's Chief. All these cards and the letter were threaded together with a piece of blue sewing-silk. We opened the letter carefully by slitting up one side, as we saw that some one had made on the flap in pencil three Latin crosses, and so we kept them intact for identification. The letter is as follows:—

S. S. 'VEGA.'
Friday, 24th March 1882.

MY DEAR MRS. GORDON,

'At last your hour of triumph has come! After the many battles we have had at the breakfast table regarding K. H.'s existence, and my stubborn scepticism as to the wonderful powers possessed by the 'Brothers,' I have been forced to a *complete belief* in their being living distinct persons, and just in proportion to my scepticism will be my *firm unalterable* opinion respecting them. I am not allowed to tell you all I know, but K. H. *appeared* to me in person two days ago, and what he told me dumbfounded me. Perhaps Madame Blavatsky will have already communicated the fact of K. H.'s appearance to you. The 'Illustrious' is uncertain whether this can be taken to Madame, or not, but he will try, notwithstanding the many difficulties in the way. If he

does not I shall post it when I arrive at port. I shall read this to Mrs. B— and ask her to mark the envelope; but *whatever happens*, you are requested by K. H. to keep this letter a profound secret until you hear from him through Madame. A storm of opposition is certain to be raised, and she has had so much to bear that it is hard she should have more.'

"Then follow some remarks about his health and the trouble which is taking him home, and the letter ends.

"In her note on the three visiting-cards Madame Blavatsky says:—'Head-quarters, March 24th. These cards and contents to certify to my doubters that the attached letter addressed to Mrs. Gordon by Mr. Eglinton was just brought to me from the *Vega* with another letter from himself to me which I keep. K. H. tells me he saw Mr. Eglinton and had a talk with him, long and convincing enough to make him a believer in the 'Brothers' as actual living beings, for the rest of his natural life. Mr. Eglinton writes to me: 'The letter which I enclose is going to be taken to Mrs. G. through your influence. You will receive it wherever you are, and will forward it to her in ordinary course. You will learn with satisfaction of my complete conversion to a belief in the 'Brothers' and I have no doubt K. H. has already told you how he appeared to me two nights ago, '&c., &c.' K. H. *told me all.* He does not however, want me to forward the letter in 'ordinary course' as it would defeat the object, but commands me to write this and send it off without delay so that it would reach you all at Howrah to-night, the 24th. I do so * * * * H. P. Blavatsky.'

"The handwriting on these cards and signature are perfectly well known to us. That on the larger card (from Mr. Eglinton's packet) attached was easily recognized as coming from Koot Hoomi. Colonel Gordon and I know his writing as well as our own;

it is so distinctly different from any other I have ever seen that among thousands I could select it. He says: 'William Eglinton thought the manifestation could only be produced through H. P. B. as a 'medium,' and that the power would become exhausted at Bombay.' We decided otherwise. Let this be a proof to all that the spirit of *living man* has as much potentiality in it, (and often more,) as a disembodied *soul*. He was anxious *to test her*, he often doubted; two nights ago he had the required proof and will doubt no more. But he is a good young man, bright, honest and true as gold when once convinced.* * *

"This card was taken from his stock to-day. Let it be an additional proof of his wonderful mediumship.* *"

K. H.

"This is written in blue ink, and across it is written in red ink a few words from the other 'Brother' (Colonel Olcott's Chohan or Chief.")

Mrs. Gordon thus sums up the more salient features of the phenomenon :—

"(1) Mr. Eglinton was personally unknown to Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, the former having not even written to him once, the latter once only—in acknowledgment of a letter of introduction from a London friend. Mr. E.'s views and theirs respecting mediumistic phenomena were in conflict. Collusion, therefore, was out of the question. (2) Mr. E.'s personal 'Spirit-guide,' using the direct voice while the medium was entranced, told me that he had now become acquainted with the 'Brothers,' and would try to do a phenomenon after Mr. Eglinton's departure by steamer from Calcutta. (3) A corroborative intimation came to me from the 'Brothers' through Madame Blavatsky, by telegram after Mr. E. had left Howrah, and while his vessel was in the stream. (4) At 8 A.M., on the 23rd, Colonel

Olcott informed us that during the night his 'Guru' had told him that K. H. had visited the *Vega*; a telegram received later in the day from Bombay corroborates this statement. (5) By appointment we sit in Mr. Eglinton's late bed-chamber at a designated hour. Colonel O. sees the doubles or astral forms of two Brothers whom he names; one extends his arm towards me and at the same instant a packet of papers falls vertically upon my shoulder: (it falls not from, but *towards* Colonel Olcott and Colonel Gordon, therefore it was not thrown by either of them). (6) A good light was burning and we could see each others' movements. (7) In the packet were a letter from Mr. E., dated the same day, on the *Vega*, and announcing that he should read the letter to a certain lady on board, and ask her to mark the envelope; also a note from Madame Blavatsky, dated at Bombay the 24th, certifying to the reception of the letter from Mr. E.; and (on one of Mr. E.'s own blank cards) messages from the two Brothers whom Colonel Olcott saw outside our windows. All these points the sceptic must dispose of: to account for any one or two will not suffice. Though every other item were brushed away, the phenomenal delivery of the papers would stand as a marvellous example of the power enjoyed by our mystical Chiefs over the forces of Nature."

A few days later she published the following certificate which reached her by post on the 28th March:—

"At 8 P.M. (Bombay Time), on Friday the 24th March, 1882, we were spending our time with Madame Blavatsky in the room as the wind was blowing powerfully outside. Madame told us that she felt that something would occur. The whole party consisting of seven persons then adjourned on the terrace, and within a few minutes after our being there, we saw a letter drop as if from under the roof above. Some of us saw the letter coming slanting from one direction and drop quite opposite to where it came from. The letter on being opened was found

to contain a closed envelope to the address of Mrs. Gordon, Howrah; on the reverse side were three crosses ††† in pencil. The envelope was of bluish colour and thin. The open letter written in red pencil contained certain instructions to Madame Blavatsky, and accordingly she put the envelope, together with three visiting cards, and strung them all with a blue thread of silk and put the packet as directed on a book case, and within five minutes after it was put there it evaporated to our no small surprise.

K. M. SHROFF,
Vice-President, Bombay T. S.

GWALA K. DEB, F.T.S.
DAMODAR K. MAVALANKAR, F.T.S.
MARTANDREW B. NAGNATH, F.T.S.
DORAB H. BHARUCHA, F.T.S.
BHAVANI SHANKAR, F.T.S."

"The packet was taken away from the book case at 21 minutes past 8 P.M. (9, Madras Time). A letter from Mr. Eglinton to myself was also received by me. In it he confesses to a firm belief in the Brothers. Speaks of K. H. having visited him two nights ago (the 22nd) on the *Vega*, &c.

H. P. BLAVATSKY."

It was, therefore, established, so far as human testimony can establish anything, that on the 22nd of March, some hours after the *Vega* had left Ceylon, one of the Brothers appeared to Eglinton, theretofore a disbeliever in their existence, and fully convinced him that he, at any rate—I mean that particular Brother—was a living man. Further, that two days later, on the 24th, when the *Vega* was five hundred miles or more away from India out at sea, letters written by Eglinton were, by occult means, transmitted instantaneously, or nearly so, from the *Vega* to Bombay, and thence, with the addition of other letters or notes, again instantaneously, or nearly so, to Howrah.

But it happened that on board the *Vega* was Mr. J. E. O'Conor, a theosophist, and to him, amongst others, Mr. Eglinton mentioned the visit of Koot Hoomi, as also his intention of sending, by occult means, letters to Madame Blavatsky and Mrs. Gordon. Hearing this Mr. O'Conor said that he too would write, and asked if his letter could also be taken. Mr. Eglinton agreed to put this letter with his own (he did not know whether it would be taken or not) and let it take its chance. Later he told Mr. O'Conor that his letter had gone with the others, and as a fact it duly reached Madame Blavatsky, but for some reason, not known to me, nearly one hour after the others came.

This was a private letter, and though Madame mentioned having received another letter, she did not know whether the writer would wish his name brought before the public, and hence no reference to this letter was allowed to appear in the published accounts.

Mr. O'Conor, seeing no notice of his letter in the published accounts of the phenomenon, and receiving naturally no answer, (as if Madame Blavatsky had the time to answer every theosophist who sees fit to write to her) chose to conclude that his letter had not reached its destination, and thought proper to write letters to India, one of which formed the basis of the subjoined article in the *Englishman* of the 27th of May:—

"It may be in the recollection of our readers that last cold season Mr. Eglinton, a spiritualistic medium of considerable repute, visited Calcutta; that séances, chiefly of a private character, were held; that phenomena of a more or less remarkable type were reported as having occurred; and that accounts, more or less detailed, of what took place were published in *Psychic Notes*—a journal specially devoted to spiritualism and to the recording cf the chief events of Mr. Eglinton's visit.

Besides, there were several letters from various parties giving detailed accounts of remarkable occurrences which fell within their own experiences. One of these communications appeared in this journal on the 7th April; and it is to this communication which we wish chiefly to refer. At the outset we wish distinctly to state that the present aspect of spiritualistic phenomena is such that it places itself, in our estimation, outside the province of public discussion; and we desire as markedly to affirm that we have no desire to initiate discussion on these topics, nor do we now purpose doing more than stating, as shortly as possible, several facts which, in view of the letter of 7th April that appeared in our columns, we feel justified in publishing. In the minds of most believers in spiritualism the belief assumes the sacred aspect of a deep religious conviction. We have no wish to wound the feelings of any such, nor can we enter, as we have said, on any discussion which is likely to follow from the statements we may now make. In order to put our readers in possession of the whole facts, it is necessary to recall shortly the substance of the letter above referred to. Mr. Eglinton went on board the *Vega* on the 14th March. On the 15th a telegram came from Madame Blavatsky to Calcutta saying the 'Illustrious' wished Mr. Eglinton to send a letter when on board to the President of the Theosophical Society at Howrah, and that he would be helped. The same day Mr. Eglinton wrote from Fisherman's Point agreeing, but expressing doubt as to its success. On the 19th Madame Blavatsky wrote to Mrs. Gordon from Bombay, saying something was going to be done; but before this letter was brought by the post peon Colonel Olcott, who had come from Berhampore on the 19th, having left Bombay on the 17th February, intimated that his *Chohan* (teacher) had told him that Koot Hoomi had been to the *Vega* and seen Mr. Eglinton. This was at eight o'clock on Thursday morning the 23rd April. A few hours later there came a telegram from Madame Blavatsky at Bombay, saying that K. H. had gone to the *Vega*

the date of the telegram being Wednesday evening, the 22nd, nine minutes past nine. On Friday the 24th Colonel Olcott, Colonel Gordon, and Mrs. Gordon sat in what had been Mr. Eglinton's room whilst in Calcutta, two 'Brothers' were seen, and a letter from Mr. Eglinton was mysteriously thrown on the floor dated the *Vega* the 24th, a card of Mr. Eglinton's with the writing of K. H. and the other Brother, and a message from Madame Blavatsky, all threaded together with blue sewing silk. Mr. Eglinton's letter stated that K. H. had appeared to him in the *Vega* two days before, that the letter he was sending had been shown to Mrs. B., a fellow passenger, and that she had marked it. Madame Blavatsky's note stated that Mr. Eglinton's letter had been sent to her from the *Vega* with another letter for herself which she keeps, and that she transmitted them to Mrs. Gordon by command of K. H.

"In the course of the deductions drawn from these alleged phenomena, Mrs. Gordon states that 'Mr. Eglinton was personally unknown to Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, the former not even having written to him once, the latter once only,' and that Mr. Eglinton's views and theirs respecting mediumistic phenomena were in conflict. From a passenger on board the *Vega* we learn that on the evening of the 22nd March the vessel left Colombo, that is the night on which Madame Blavatsky telegraphs from Bombay K. H.'s visit to the *Vega*. On the 24th Mr. Eglinton told the passenger that he had seen Koot Hoomi that night, and that some remarkable statements had been made to him by K. H., of whose existence he was now firmly convinced. He said he was going to write to Mrs. Gordon, and tell her what had happened, and hoped that K. H. would take the letter. The letter, already written, he showed the passenger, who says it was the one which was published on the 7th April in our columns. The letter was also shown to Mrs. B., and she marked the envelope with a

certain mark. Our informant is himself an initiated theosophist, and naturally felt a good deal interested. He suggested that he might take the same opportunity to send a letter to Madame Blavatsky, with whom he was acquainted. Mr. Eglinton agreed, the letter was written, and put with Mr. Eglinton's. The next day, on the 25th, the *Vega* passenger was told that the letters had gone, that is, had disappeared. On reaching Gravesend on the 22nd April letters were delivered on board, and he was surprised to find that Mrs. B. had heard from her husband in Calcutta that Mr. Eglinton's letter had been received there. He also heard, but is unable to state positively whether it is the case or not, that her mark on the letter delivered in Calcutta was *not* the same as that which she had made on board. The passenger heard nothing of *his* letter, and has heard nothing since. It is not referred to in Madame Blavatsky's account, nor in Mrs. Gordon's statement, and the question is what became of it. Mr. Eglinton received it, and the writer was told it had been taken away with Mr. Eglinton's, and yet it disappears, while Mr. Eglinton's letter is duly conveyed. Under these circumstances, the writer of the letter on board the *Vega* is entitled to claim, that without being unreasonably sceptical he should have further proof of the alleged phenomenon. Most people of ordinary intelligence, possessing anything of a critical or judicial faculty, will, no doubt, agree with this. No imputation of bad faith is meant to apply to any one, but under the circumstances, dates, telegram, messages, &c., to most minds the alleged aerial conveyance of letters is no proof. Had the undelivered letter been received the writer, no doubt, would have been convinced, and apart from that, if there had been evidence to show that the marked letter of Mrs. B. received from on board the *Vega* is the identical letter marked by that lady herself, there would have been some satisfactory evidence of remarkable phenomena. But as a matter of fact, the marks on the envelope, which appeared in Calcutta, on the 25th of March, were three separate Latin

crosses in a horizontal line. Mr. Eglinton on board the *Vega* marked the envelope of the letter he showed Mrs. B. with one cross; she crossed that cross obliquely twice, making an asterisk of it. There is another point which deserves notice. Mrs. Gordon's statement is that Mr. Eglinton was personally unknown to either Madame Blavatsky or Colonel Olcott, the former not having not even written to him once. This statement is directly opposed to Mr. Eglinton's affirmation to the *Vega* passenger. Mr. Eglinton, though he has never met Madame Blavatsky, has had a very extensive correspondence with her, and stated to him that her letters were very long ones. Of Mr. Eglinton himself, the impression left by him on those with whom he comes in contact is that he is honest and straightforward. Of the other actors in this affair we desire to express no opinion other than that they are, no doubt, actuated by the highest motives in their search for truth as it presents itself to them. We venture to pronounce no opinion on the case. We have placed the facts, so far as they are known to us, before our readers, and we leave them to form their own judgment on the whole matter."

This elicited the following letter which appeared in the *Englishman* of the 5th June :—

"SIR,—Every one interested in the subject, connected with which a recent transfer of letters from the *Vega* to Bombay and Calcutta is an important fact, will recognise with much pleasure the anxiety to state the case fairly which distinguishes your article published on the 27th. But some of the facts are stated in a way which fails to convey to the reader, who now hears of them for the first time, an accurate impression as to the course of events. First of all you interweave with the narrative concerning the letter that was conveyed several references to another letter which was not conveyed. Now the fact that I received a copy of the *Times* by the post from London is not invalidated by the fact that

I do not receive a copy of the *Daily News*. The two letters have nothing to do with one another, and it does not follow that because certain occult adepts chose to make provision for the conveyance, by occult means, of a letter from Mr. Eglinton, a medium whose faculties they could perhaps make use of to facilitate the transaction, that they should also be willing to make the necessary effort simply to gratify the curiosity of another person. You also refer to the inference drawn by ourselves, as to who made the marks on the envelope. All Mr. Eglinton said in his letter was: 'I shall read this letter to Mrs. B. and ask her to mark the envelope.' In the account published I wrote: 'We opened the letter carefully by slitting up the side as we saw that some one had made on the flap of the envelope, in pencil, three Latin crosses.' With the singular incapacity to understand the important element of test conditions which distinguishes nearly all mediums and persons long familiarised with occult phenomena, Mr. Eglinton unfortunately opened the envelope which had been first marked, he having enclosed another letter and made it too heavy. He then used a new envelope, and being unable to find at the moment the lady who marked the former envelope, he, in the presence of three witnesses, made the crosses, differing, as you say, from those made before. But tiresome as this mistake on his part is, it leaves the substantial elements of the wonderful feat accomplished altogether untouched. The letter was read, before being sent, to several of the passengers on board the *Vega*, and that would alone establish its identity except on the hypothesis of fraudulent collusion between Mr. Eglinton and the founders of the Theosophical Society in India. Now remember that the letter, before being brought to Calcutta, was taken to Bombay, where it was suddenly dropped down out of the air in the presence of seven people whose testimony to this occurrence has been published. In the presence of these people, cards were now written on, and attached to the original letter, and then the whole

collection of documents was dropped down a few moments afterwards in the presence of Colonel Gordon and myself in Howrah. The identification of these cards is complete. They were prepared under the eyes of the witnesses at Bombay, and as they certify 'tied with a blue thread of silk, and the packet put as directed on a book case, and within five minutes after it was put there it evaporated to our no small surprise.' The transmission of the cards from Bombay to Calcutta, if itself established, irrefragably establishes the transmission of the letter also ; and, if it can be shown that a letter can be taken this distance by occult means, the difficulty of believing that it was conveyed from the *Vega* to Bombay is considerably diminished. Finally, the Indian public must please to remember that the object with which phenomena of this kind are performed is not so much to break down incredulity, as to awaken the attention of people with patient, inquiring and unprejudiced minds, who may thus be led from one step to another until, by a circuitous path, which is none the less continuous, they are conducted into regions to which the miscellaneous and unthinking crowd is neither expected nor invited to penetrate. The published account of the *Vega* phenomena will, perhaps, induce some persons who have not hitherto been attracted to the subject to examine the records of the numerous and no less astonishing phenomena which have attended the operations of the Theosophical Society in India during the last two years. In that case its *secondary* object—for its *first* had reference to the spiritualistic world only—will be fully realized. The *Vega* passenger whom you refer to may have misunderstood Mr. Eglinton's remarks about his correspondence with Madame Blavatsky. I believe she has never written to Mr. Eglinton, and I know both from her and himself that she has not done so for the last year. It would make this letter too long to go into further details on this subject.

A. GORDON."

SIMLA, *May 30th*, 1882.

And the following letter which appeared in the *Englishman* of the 13th June :—

"SIR,—My attention has just been directed to an article in your issue of the 27th ultimo, and to a letter of Mrs. Gordon's in your issue of the 5th instant, both referring to the letters transmitted from the *Vega* by occult agencies.

"Mrs. Gordon was apparently not aware, as I am,* that Mr. ——'s letter duly reached Madame Blavatsky on the same day as Mr. Eglinton's letters. It was a private letter, and hence no reference was made to it in the published accounts of the transmission of the other *letters*, *cards*, &c.

"As Mr. —— is a Theosophist, I think that before inspiring, as I know he did, that article of yours of the 27th ultimo, he might at least have written or telegraphed to Bombay to learn whether his letter had or had not been received.

"As it is, Madame Blavatsky's delicacy in saying nothing (outside our inner circle) about a private letter which she did not know whether the writer would or would not wish her to use, has been, very foolishly, made a ground for attempting to throw doubt upon a perfectly distinct phenomenon.

"ALLAN HUME."

SIMLA, *7th June* 1882.

Viewed as a whole I think it must be admitted that this phenomenon is a very satisfactory one, and that it distinctly tends to establish the existence of the Brothers. Of course, I personally *now* KNOW that they *do* exist.

July 1882. H. X.

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* This letter of Mr. ——'s, is I may mention in my possession, together with a letter of Madame Blavatsky's of the 28th of March, enclosing it and explaining why she wished the matter kept secret.—*A. Hume.*

[This footnote, (Mr. Hume, to whom I am indebted for a copy of his letter, informs me,) was not, for some reason, printed in the *Englishman*.—H. X.]

The last sheets of this Second Edition were passing through the Press when the following well authenticated statement was handed to me:—

Statement of Tholuvore Velayudham Mudeliar, Second Tamil Pandit of the Presidency College, Madras.

To the Author of "HINTS ON ESOTERIC THEOSOPHY."

"SIR,—I beg to inform you that I was a *Chela* of the late 'Arulprakasa Vallalare,' otherwise known as Chithumbaram Ramalinga Pillay Avergal, the celebrated Yogi of Southern India. Having come to know that the English community, as well as some Hindus, entertained doubts as to the existence of the *Mahatmas* (adepts), and, as to the fact of the Theosophical Society having been formed under their special orders; and having heard, moreover, of your recent work, in which much pains are taken to present the evidence about these Mahatmas *pro* and *con*—I wish to make public certain facts in connection with my late revered Guru. My belief is, that they ought effectually to remove all such doubts, and prove that Theosophy is no empty delusion, nor the Society in question founded on an insecure basis.

"Let me premise with a brief description of the personality of, and the doctrines taught by, the above mentioned ascetic, Ramalingam Pillay.

"He was born at Maruthur, Chittambaram Taluq, South Arcot, Madras Presidency. He came to live at Madras at an early period of his career, and dwelt there for a long time. At the age of nine, without any reading, Ramalingam is certified by eye-witnesses to have been able to recite the contents of the works of Agustia and other Munis equally respected by Dravidians and Aryans. In 1849, I became his disciple, and though no one ever knew where he had been initiated, some years after he gathered a number

of disciples around him. He was a great Alchemist. He had a strange faculty about him, witnessed very often, of changing a carnivorous person into a vegetarian; a mere glance from him seemed enough to destroy the desire for animal food. He had also the wonderful faculty of reading other men's minds. In the year 1855, he left Madras for Chidambaram, and thence proceeded to Vadulur and Karingooli, where he remained a number of years. Many a time, during his stay there, he used to leave his followers, disappearing, to go no one knew whither, and remaining absent for more or less prolonged periods of time. In personal appearance, Ramalingam was a moderately tall, spare man—so spare, indeed, as to virtually appear a skeleton—yet withal a strong man, erect in stature, and walking very rapidly; with a face of a clear brown complexion, a straight, thin nose, very large fiery eyes, and with a look of constant sorrow on his face. Toward the end he *let his hair grow long;* and, what is rather unusual with Yogis, he wore shoes. His garments consisted but of two pieces of white cloth. His habits were excessively abstemious. He was known to hardly ever take any rest. A strict vegetarian, he ate but once in two or three days, and was then satisfied with a few mouthfuls of rice. But when fasting for a period of two or three months at a time, he literally ate nothing, living merely on warm water with a little sugar dissolved in it.

"As he preached against caste, he was not very popular; but still people of all castes gathered in large numbers around him. They came not so much for his teachings, as in the hope of *witnessing* and learning phenomena, or 'miracles,' with the power of producing which he was generally credited; though he himself discredited the idea of anything supernatural, asserting constantly that his was a religion based on pure science. Among many other things he preached that:—

"(1.) Though the Hindu people listened not to him, nor gave ear to his counsels, yet the esoteric

meaning of the Vedas and other sacred books of the East would be revealed by the custodians of the secret—the Mahatmas—to foreigners, who would receive it with joy.

"(2.) That the fatal influence of the Kalipurusha Cycle, which now rules the world, will be neutralized in about ten years.

"(3.) That the use of animal food would be gradually relinquished.

"(4.) That the distinction between races and castes would eventually cease, and the principle of Universal Brotherhood be eventually accepted, and a Universal Brotherhood be established in India.

"(5.) That what men call "God" is, in fact, the principle of Universal Love—which produces and sustains perfect Harmony and Equilibrium throughout all nature.

"(6.) That men, once they have ascertained the divine power latent in them, would acquire such wonderful powers as to be able to change the ordinary operations of the law of gravity, &c., &c.

"In the year 1867, he founded a Society, under the name of 'Sumarasa Veda Sanmarga Sungham,' which means a society based on the principle of Universal Brotherhood, and for the propagation of the true Vedic doctrine. I need hardly remark that these principles are identically those of the Theosophical Society. Our Society was in existence but for five or six years, during which time a very large number of poor and infirm persons were fed at the expense of its members.

"When he had attained his 54th year (1873), he began to prepare his disciples for his departure from the world. He announced his intention of going into Samadhi. During the first half of 1873 he preached most forcibly his views upon Human Brotherhood; but, during the last quarter of the

year, he gave up lecturing entirely and maintained an almost unbroken silence. He resumed speech in the last days of January 1874, and reiterated his prophecies—hereinafter narrated. On the 30th of that month, at Metucuppam, we saw our master for the last time. Selecting a small building, he entered its solitary room after taking an affectionate farewell of his *Chelas*, stretched himself on the carpet, and then, by his orders, the door was locked and the only opening walled up. But when, a year later, the place was opened and examined, there was nothing to be seen but a vacant room. He left with us a promise to re-appear some day, but would give us no intimation as to the time, place, or circumstances. Until then, however, he said that he would be working not in India alone, but also in Europe and America and all other countries, to influence the minds of the right men to assist in preparing for the regeneration of the world.

"Such, in short, is the history of this great man. The facts I have referred to above are within the knowledge of thousands of people. His whole occupation was the preaching of the sublime moral doctrines contained in the Hindu Shastras, and the instilling into the masses of the principles of Universal Brotherhood, benevolence, and charity. But to his great disappointment he found among his large congregations but few who could appreciate his lofty ethics. During the latter part of his visible earthly career, he often expressed his bitter sorrow for this sad state of things, and repeatedly exclaimed—

"'You are not fit to become members of this Society of Universal Brotherhood. *The real members of that Brotherhood are living far away, towards the north of India.* You do not listen to me. You do not follow the principles of my teachings. You seem to be determined not to be convinced by me. YET THE TIME IS NOT FAR OFF WHEN PERSONS FROM RUSSIA, AMERICA (these two countries were always named), and other foreign lands WILL COME

TO INDIA AND PREACH TO YOU THIS SAME DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD. Then only will you know and appreciate the grand truths that I am now vainly trying to make you accept. You will soon find that THE BROTHERS WHO LIVE IN THE FAR NORTH will work a great many wonders in India, and thus confer incalculable benefits upon this our country.'

"This prophecy has, in my opinion, just been literally fulfilled. The fact that the Mahatmas in the North exist, is no new idea to us, Hindus; and the strange fact that the advent of Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott from Russia and America was foretold several years before they came to India, is an incontrovertible proof that my Guru was in communication with those Mahatmas under whose directions the Theosophical Society was subsequently founded."

THOLUVORE VELAYUDHAM MUDELIAR, F.T.S.

Witnesses:

MUNJACUPPUM SINGARAVELU MUDELIAR,
President of the Krishna Theo. Socy.

COMBACONAM ARAVAMUDU AYANGAR,
Fellow of the Nellore Theosophical Society.

"The official position of Vellayu Pandit as one of the Pandits of the Presidency College is an ample guarantee of his respectability and trustworthiness."

G. MUTTUSWAMY CHETTY,
Judge of the Small Cause Court, Madras,
Vice-President of the Madras Theo. Socy.

On this Madame H. P. Blavatsky remarks: "This is one of those cases of previous foretelling of a coming event, which is least of all open to suspicion of bad faith. The honourable character of the wit-

ness, the wide publicity of his Guru's announcements, and the impossibility that he could have got from public rumour, or the journals of the day, any intimation that the Theosophical Society would be formed and would operate in India—all these conspire to support the inference that Ramalingam Yogi was verily in the counsels of those who ordered us to found the Society. In March 1873, we were directed to proceed from Russia to Paris. In June we were told to proceed to the United States, where we arrived July 6th. This was the very time when Ramalingam was most forcibly prefiguring the events which should happen. In October 1874, we received an intimation to go to Chittenden, Vermont, where, at the famous homestead of the Eddy family, Colonel Olcott was engaged in making his investigations—now so celebrated in the annals of Spiritualism—of the so-called "materialization of spirits." November, 1875, the Theosophical Society was founded, and it was not until 1878 that the correspondence begun with friends in India, which resulted in the transfer of the Society's Head-Quarters to Bombay in February, 1879."

These facts speak for themselves.—H. X.